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DISSERTATIONS  
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MISCELLANEOUS PIECES  
RELATING TO THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES,  
THE  
ARTS, SCIENCES, AND LITERATURE  
OF  
*A S I A.*  

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VOL. I.





A. h. 749

DISSERTATIONS  
AND  
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES  
RELATING TO THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES,  
THE  
ARTS, SCIENCES, AND LITERATURE,  
OF  
*A S I A,*

BY

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AND OTHERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTAINING

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## P R E F A C E.

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**I**T is a consideration which cannot but afford the utmost pleasure to a reflecting mind, that the Arts and Sciences, which are rapidly advancing towards a state of perfection in EUROPE, are not confined to that quarter of the globe. In the East, where Learning seemed to be extinguished, and Civilization nearly lost, amidst the contention of avarice and despotism, a spirit of enquiry hath gone forth,

## P R E F A C E.

which, aided by the ardour of Philosophy, promises to dissipate the gloom of ignorance, and to spread the advantages of knowledge through a region where its effects may be expected to be most favourable to the general interests of society.

To the exertions of one Gentleman, whose various excellencies panegyric might display in the warmest terms, without being charged with extravagance, the ENGLISH settlements in the EAST INDIES are indebted for an institution which has already exhibited specimens of profound research, of bold investigation, and of happy illustration, in various subjects of literature;---subjects which, until the present times, had

had

## P R E F A C E.

had not exercised the faculties of EUROPEANS; but which, being produced to publick notice, will enlarge the bounds of knowledge, increase the stock of information, and furnish materials for future Philosophers, Biographers, and Historians.

THAT so much has been already achieved by an infant Society, will be a subject of surprize to those who have not considered the powers of genius and industry to overcome obstacles. From what has already appeared at CALCUTTA, a judgment may be formed of what may hereafter be expected. The stores of Oriental Literature being now accessible to those who have ability to make a proper use of them, intelligence



## P R E F A C E.

gence hitherto locked up, it may be hoped, will delight and inform the enquirers after the History, Antiquities, Arts, Sciences, and Literature of ASIA.

Two Volumes of the Society's Transactions have been already published; but these have been so sparingly distributed in GREAT BRITAIN that few have had the opportunity of being informed of their contents, or of judging of their value. This circumstance has induced the Editor to select the contents of the present volumes from them and the Asiatic Miscellany, for the amusement and instruction of the publick. They are such as will confer honour on their authors, and afford entertainment to their readers. They contain a noble  
specimen

## P R E F A C E.

specimen of the talents of our countrymen inhabiting a distant quarter of the globe, employing themselves sedulously and honourably in extending the credit and establishing the reputation of BRITONS in new and unexplored regions of Science and Literature.

THE



the city of London, from the first settlement of the  
 Romans, to the present time. In which is contained  
 the names of the several kings, bishops, and  
 other eminent persons, who have reigned or  
 lived in this city, with the names of the  
 streets, lanes, and alleys, and the names of  
 the houses, and the names of the  
 persons who have lived in them.

The first settlement of the Romans in this  
 city was in the year of our Lord 43, when  
 Julius Cæsar sent a colony of Roman  
 soldiers to settle in this city, and to build  
 a city, which they called Londinium. This  
 city was the first city in Britain, and was  
 the first city in which the Romans settled.  
 The city of London was the first city in  
 which the Romans settled, and was the first  
 city in which the Romans settled.

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DISSERTATIONS  
ON THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES,  
THE  
ARTS, SCIENCES, AND LITERATURE,  
OF  
*A S I A.*

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DISSERTATION I.  
ON THE  
GODS OF GREECE, ITALY, AND INDIA;  
WRITTEN IN MDCCLXXXIV.

WE cannot justly conclude, by arguments preceding the proof of facts, that one idolatrous people must have borrowed their deities, rites, and tenets from another; since Gods of all shapes and dimensions may be framed by the boundless powers of imagination, or by the frauds and follies of men, in countries never connected; but when features of resemblance, too strong to have been accidental, are observable in different systems of polytheism, without fancy or prejudice to colour them and im-

prove the likeness, we can scarce help believing, that some connection has immemorially subsisted between the several nations who have adopted them: it is my design in this essay to point out such a resemblance between the popular worship of the old *Greeks* and *Italians* and that of the *Hindus*; nor can there be room to doubt of a great similarity between their strange religions and that of *Egypt*, *China*, *Persia*, *Pbrygia*, *Pbanice*, *Syria*; to which, perhaps, we may safely add some of the southern kingdoms and even islands of *America*; while the *Gothick* system, which prevailed in the northern regions of *Europe*, was not merely similar to those of *Greece* and *Italy*, but almost the same in another dress with an embroidery of images apparently *Asiatick*. From all this, if it be satisfactorily proved, we may infer a general union or affinity between the most distinguished inhabitants of the primitive world at the time when they deviated, as they did too early deviate, from the rational adoration of the only true God.

THERE seem to have been four principal sources of all mythology. I. Historical, or natural, truth has been perverted into fable by ignorance, imagination, flattery, or stupidity; as a king of *Crete*, whose tomb had been discovered in that island, was conceived to have been the God of  
*Olympus*,

*Olympus*, and *MINOS*, a legislator of that country, to have been his son, and to hold a supreme appellate jurisdiction over departed souls: hence too probably flowed the tale of *CADMUS*, as *BOCHART* learnedly traces it; hence beacons or volcanos became one-eyed giants and monsters vomiting flames; and two rocks, from their appearance to mariners in certain positions, were supposed to crush all vessels attempting to pass between them; of which idle fictions many other instances might be collected from the *Odyssy* and the various *Argonautick* poems. The less we say of *Julian* stars, deifications of princes or warriors, altars raised, with those of *APOLLO*, to the basest of men, and divine titles bestowed on such wretches as *CAIUS OCTAVIANUS*, the less we shall expose the infamy of grave senators and fine poets, or the brutal folly of the low multitude: but we may be assured, that the mad apotheosis of truly great men, or of little men falsely called great, has been the origin of gross idolatrous errors in every part of the pagan world. II. The next source of them appears to have been a wild admiration of the heavenly bodies, and, after a time, the systems and calculations of astronomers: hence came a considerable portion of *Egyptian* and *Grecian* fable; the *Sabian* worship in *Arabia*; the *Persian* types and emblems



of *Mibyr* or the sun, and the far-extended adoration of the elements and the powers of nature; and hence perhaps all the artificial Chronology of the *Chinese* and *Indians*, with the invention of demigods and heroes to fill the vacant niches in their extravagant and imaginary periods.

III. Numberless divinities have been created solely by the magic of poetry; whose essential business it is to personify the most abstract notions, and to place a nymph or a genius in every grove and almost in every flower: hence *Hygieia* and *Jaso*, health and remedy, are the poetical daughters of *ÆSCULAPIUS*, who was either a distinguished physician, or medical skill personified; and hence *Choris*, or verdure, is married to the *Zephyr*.

IV. The metaphors and allegories of moralists and metaphysicians have been also very fertile in Deities; of which a thousand examples might be adduced from *PLATO*, *CICERO*, and the inventive commentators on *HOMER* in their pedigrees of the Gods, and their fabulous lessons of morality: the richest and noblest stream from this abundant fountain is the charming philosophical tale of *PSYCHE*, or the *Progress of the Soul*; than which, to my taste, a more beautiful, sublime, and well-supported allegory was never produced by the wisdom and ingenuity of man. Hence also the *Indian* *MA'YA'*, or, as the word is explained

plained by some *Hindu* scholars, “the first inclination of the Godhead to diversify himself” (such is their phrase) by creating worlds,” is feigned to be the mother of universal nature, and of all the inferior Gods; as a *Cashmirian* informed me when I asked him, why CA’MA, or *Love*, was represented as her son; but the word MA’YA’, or *delusion*, has a more subtle and recondite sense in the *Vedānta* philosophy, where it signifies the system of *perceptions*, whether of secondary or of primary qualities, which the Deity was believed by EPICHRAMUS, PLATO, and many truly pious men, to raise by his omnipresent spirit in the minds of his creatures, but which had not, in their opinion, any existence independent of mind.

IN drawing a parallel between the Gods of the *Indian* and *European* heathens, from whatever source they were derived, I shall remember, that nothing is less favourable to inquiries after truth than a systematical spirit, and shall call to mind the saying of a *Hindu* writer, “that whoever obstinately adheres to any set of opinions, may bring himself to believe that the freshest sandal-wood is a flame of fire:” this will effectually prevent me from insisting that such a God of *India* was the JUPITER of *Greece*; such, the APOLLO; such, the MERCURY: in fact, since all the causes of



polytheism contributed largely to the assemblage of *Grecian* divinities (though BACON reduces them all to refined allegories, and NEWTON to a poetical disguise of true history), we find many JOVES, many APOLLOS, many MERCURIES, with distinct attributes and capacities; nor shall I presume to suggest more, than that, in one capacity or another, there exists a striking similitude between the chief objects of worship in ancient *Greece* or *Italy* and in the very interesting country which we now inhabit.

THE comparison which I proceed to lay before you, must needs be very superficial, partly from my short residence in *Hindustan*, partly from my want of complete leisure for literary amusements, but principally because I have no *European* book to refresh my memory of old fables, except the conceited, though not unlearned, work of POMEY, entitled *The Pantheon*, and that so miserably translated, that it can hardly be read with patience. A thousand more strokes of resemblance might, I am sure, be collected by any who should with that view peruse HESIOD, HYGINUS, CORNUTUS, and the other mythologists; or, which would be a shorter and a pleasanter way, should be satisfied with the very elegant *Syntagmata* of LILIUS GIRALDUS.

Dis-

DISQUISITIONS concerning the manners and conduct of our species in early times, or indeed at any time, are always curious at least and amusing; but they are highly interesting to such as can say of themselves with CHREMES in the play, "We are men, and take an interest in all that relates to mankind:" They may even be of solid importance in an age when some intelligent and virtuous persons are inclined to doubt the authenticity of the accounts, delivered by MOSES, concerning the primitive world; since no modes or sources of reasoning can be unimportant which have a tendency to remove such doubts. Either the first eleven chapters of *Genesis*, all due allowances being made for a figurative Eastern style, are true, or the whole fabrick of our national religion is false; a conclusion which none of us, I trust, would wish to be drawn. I, who cannot help believing the divinity of the MESSIAH, from the undisputed antiquity and manifest completion of many prophecies, especially those of ISAIAH, in the only person recorded by history to whom they are applicable, am obliged of course to believe the sanctity of the venerable books, to which that sacred person refers as genuine: but it is not the truth of our national religion, as such, that I have at heart; it is truth itself; and if any cool unbiassed reasoner

will clearly convince me that MOSES drew his narrative through *Egyptian* conduits from the primeval fountains of *Indian* literature, I shall esteem him as a friend for having weeded my mind from a capital error, and promise to stand among the foremost in assisting to circulate the truth, which he has ascertained. After such a declaration, I cannot but persuade myself, that no candid man will be displeased if, in the course of my work, I make as free with any arguments that he may have advanced, as I should really desire him to do with any of mine that he may be disposed to controvert. Having no system of my own to maintain, I shall not pursue a very regular method, but shall take all the Gods, of whom I discourse, as they happen to present themselves; beginning, however, like the *Romans* and the *Hindus*, with JANUS or GANESA.

THE titles and attributes of this old *Italian* deity are fully comprised in two choriambick verses of Sulpitius; and a farther account of him from OVID would here be superfluous:

*Jane pater, Jane tuent, dive biceps, bisformis,  
O cuncta rerum sator, O principium deorum!*

“Father JANUS, all-beholding JANUS, thou divinity with two heads, and with two forms; O sagacious planter of all things, and leader of deities!”

HE

HE was the God, we see, of *Wisdom*; whence he is represented on coins with *two*, and on the *Ettruscan* image found at *Falisci* with *four* faces; emblems of prudence and circumspection: thus is GANE'SA, the God of *Wisdom* in *Hindustan*, painted with an *Elephant's* head, the symbol of sagacious discernment, and attended by a favourite *rat*, which the *Indians* consider as a wise and provident animal. His next great character (the plentiful source of many superstitious usages) was that, from which he is emphatically stiled *the father*, and which the second verse before cited more fully expresses, *the origin and founder of all things*; whence this notion arose, unless from a tradition that he first built shrines, raised altars, and instituted sacrifices, it is not easy to conjecture; hence it came, however, that his name was invoked before any other God; that, in the old sacred rites, corn and wine, and, in later times, incense also, were first offered to JANUS; that the *doors* or *entrances* to private houses were called *Januæ*, and any pervious passage or thoroughfare, in the plural number, *Jani*, or *with two beginnings*; that he was represented holding a rod, as guardian of ways, and a key, as *opening*, not gates only, but *all important works and affairs* of mankind; that he was thought to preside over the morning, or  
*beginning*



*beginning of day*; that, although the *Roman* year began regularly with *March*, yet the eleventh month, named *Januarius*, was considered as *first* of the twelve, whence the whole year was supposed to be under his guidance, and opened with great solemnity by the consuls inaugurated in his fane, where his statue was decorated on that occasion with fresh laurel; and, for the same reason, a solemn denunciation of war, than which there can hardly be a more momentous national act, was made by the military consul's opening the gates of his temple with all the pomp of his magistracy. The twelve altars and twelve chapels of JANUS might either denote, according to the general opinion, that he leads and governs twelve months, or that, as he says of himself in OVID, all entrance and access must be made through him to the principal Gods, who were, to a proverb, of the same number. We may add, that JANUS was imagined to preside over infants at their birth, or the *beginning* of life.

THE *Indian* divinity has precisely the same character: all sacrifices and religious ceremonies, all addresses even to superior Gods, all serious compositions in writing, and all worldly affairs of moment, are begun by pious *Hindus* with an invocation of GANESA; a word composed of *isa*, the *governor* or *leader*, and *gan'a*,  
or

or a company of deities, *nine* of which companies are enumerated in the *Amarcôsh*. Instances of opening business auspiciously by an ejaculation to the JANUS of *India* (if the lines of resemblance here traced will justify me in so calling him) might be multiplied with ease. Few books are begun without the words *salutation to GANE'S*, and he is first invoked by the *Bráhmans*, who conduct the trial by ordeal, or perform the ceremony of the *bóma*, or sacrifice to fire. M. SONNERAT represents him as highly revered on the coast of *Coromandel*; “ where  
 “ the *Indians* (he says) would not on any account build a house without having placed  
 “ on the ground an image of this deity, which  
 “ they sprinkle with oil and adorn every day  
 “ with flowers; they set up his figure in all  
 “ their temples, in the streets, in the high  
 “ roads, and in open plains at the foot of some  
 “ tree; so that persons of all ranks may invoke him before they undertake any business,  
 “ and travellers worship him before they proceed on their journey.” To this I may add, from my own observation, that in the commodious and useful town which now rises at *Dharmáranya* or *Gayà*, under the auspices of the active and benevolent THOMAS LAW, Esq. collector of *Rotas*, every new-built house, agreeably to an immemorial usage of the *Hindus*,  
 has

has the name of GANE'SA supercribed on its door; and, in the old town, his image is placed over the gates of the temples.

WE come now to SATURN, the oldest of the pagan Gods, of whose office and actions much is recorded. The jargon of his being the son of Earth and of Heaven, who was the son of the Sky and the Day, is purely a confession of ignorance who were his parents or who his predecessors; and there appears more sense in the tradition said to be mentioned by the inquisitive and well-informed PLATO, "that both  
" SATURN, or *Time*, and his consort CYBELE,  
" or the *Earth*, together with their attend-  
" ants, were the children of *Ocean* and THE-  
" TIS, or, in less poetical language, sprang  
" from the waters of the great deep." CERES, the goddess of harvests, was, it seems, their daughter; and VIRGIL describes "the mo-  
" ther and nurse of all as crowned with tur-  
" rets, in a car drawn by lions, and exult-  
" ing in her hundred grand-sons, all divine,  
" all inhabiting splendid celestial mansions."  
As the God of time, or rather as *Time* itself personified, SATURN was usually painted by the heathens holding a scythe in one hand, and in the other a snake with its tail in its mouth, the symbol of perpetual cycles and revolutions of ages: he was often represented in the act of devour-

devouring years, in the form of children, and, sometimes, encircled by the seasons appearing like boys and girls. By the *Latins* he was named SATURNUS; and the most ingenious etymology of that word is given by FESTUS the grammarian; who traces it, by a learned analogy to many similar names, à *satu*, from planting, because, when he reigned in *Italy*, he introduced and improved agriculture: but his distinguishing character, which explains, indeed, all his other titles and functions, was expressed allegorically by the stern of a ship or galley on the reverse of his ancient coins; for which OVID assigns a very unsatisfactory reason, “because the divine stranger arrived in a ship on the *Italian* coast;” as if he could have been expected on horse-back, or hovering through the air.

THE account, quoted by POMPEY from ALEXANDER POLYHISTOR, casts a clearer light, if it really came from genuine antiquity, on the whole tale of SATURN; “that he predicted an extraordinary fall of rain, and ordered the construction of a vessel, in which it was necessary to secure men, beasts, birds, and reptiles from a general inundation.”

Now it seems not easy to take a cool review of all these testimonies concerning the birth,



birth, kindred, offspring, character, occupations, and entire life of SATURN, without assenting to the opinion of BOCHART, or admitting it at least to be highly probable, that the fable was raised on the true history of NOAH; from whose flood a new period of *time* was computed, and a new series of ages may be said to have sprung; who rose fresh, and, as it were, newly born from the waves; whose wife was in fact the universal mother, and, that the earth might soon be repeopled, was early blessed with numerous and flourishing descendants: if we produce, therefore, an *Indian* king of divine birth, eminent for his piety and beneficence, whose story seems evidently to be that of NOAH disguised by *Asiatick* fiction, we may safely offer a conjecture, that he was also the same personage with SATURN. This was MENU, or SATYAVRATA, whose patronymick name was VAIVASWATA, or Child of the SUN; and whom the *Indians* believe to have reigned over the whole world in the earliest age of their chronology, but to have resided in the country of *Dravira*, on the coast of the Eastern *Indian* Peninsula: the following narrative of the principal event in his life I have literally translated from the *Bhāgavat*; and it is the subject of the first *Purāna*, entitled that of the *Matsya*, or *Fish*.

DESIRING the preservation of herds, and  
 of *Bráhmans*, of genii and virtuous men, of  
 the *Vedas*, of law, and of precious things,  
 the lord of the universe assumes many bodily  
 shapes; but, though he pervades, like the  
 air, a variety of beings, yet he is himself  
 unvaried, since he has no quality subject to  
 change. At the close of the last *Calpa*,  
 there was a general destruction occasioned by  
 the sleep of BRAHMA'; whence his creatures  
 in different worlds were drowned in a vast  
 ocean. BRAHMA', being inclined to slum-  
 ber, desiring repose after a lapse of ages, the  
 strong demon HAYAGRI'VA came near him,  
 and stole the *Vedas*, which had flowed from  
 his lips. When HARI, the preserver of the  
 universe, discovered this deed of the Prince  
 of *Dánavas*, he took the shape of a minute  
 fish, called *sap'bari*. A holy king, named  
 SATYAVRATA, then reigned; a servant of  
 the spirit, which moved on the waves, and  
 so devout, that water was his only sus-  
 tenance. He was the child of the Sun, and, in  
 the present *Calpa*, is invested by NARA'YAN  
 in the office of *Menu*; by the name of  
 SRA'DDHADÉ'VA, or the God of Obsequies.  
 One day, as he was making a libation in the  
 river *Critamála*, and held water in the palm  
 of his hand, he perceived a small fish moving  
 in

‘ in it. The king of *Dravira* immediately  
‘ dropped the fish into the river together with  
‘ the water, which he had taken from it;  
‘ when the *sap’bari* thus pathetically addressed  
‘ the benevolent monarch: “How canst thou,  
“ O king, who showest affection to the op-  
“ pressed, leave me in this river-water, where  
“ I am too weak to resist the monsters of the  
“ stream, who fill me with dread?” He, not  
‘ knowing who had assumed the form of a fish,  
‘ applied his mind to the preservation of the  
‘ *sap’bari*, both from good-nature and from re-  
‘ gard to his own soul; and, having heard its  
‘ very suppliant address, he kindly placed it  
‘ under his protection in a small vase full of  
‘ water; but, in a single night, its bulk was  
‘ so increased, that it could not be contained in  
‘ the jar, and thus again addressed the illus-  
‘ trious Prince: “I am not pleased with living  
“ miserably in this little vase; make me a large  
“ mansion, where I may dwell in comfort.”  
‘ The king, removing it thence, placed it in  
‘ the water of a cistern; but it grew three cu-  
‘ bits in less than fifty minutes, and said:  
“ O king, it pleases me not to stay vainly in  
“ this narrow cistern: since thou hast granted  
“ me an asylum, give me a spacious habita-  
“ tion.” He then removed it, and placed it  
‘ in

' in a pool, where, having ample space around  
 ' its body, it became a fish of considerable  
 ' size. " This abode, O king, is not conve-  
 " nient for me, who must swim at large in the  
 " waters : exert thyself for my safety, and re-  
 " move me to a deep lake." Thus addressed,  
 ' the pious monarch threw the suppliant into a  
 ' lake, and when it grew of equal bulk with  
 ' that piece of water, he cast the vast fish into  
 ' the sea. When the fish was thrown into the  
 ' waves, he thus again spoke to SATYAVRA-  
 ' TA : " Here the horned tharks, and other  
 " monsters of great strength will devour me ;  
 " thou shouldst not, O valiant man, leave me  
 " in this ocean." Thus repeatedly deluded by  
 ' the fish, who had addressed him with gentle  
 ' words, the king said : " Who art thou, that  
 " beguilest me in that assumed shape ? Never  
 " before have I seen or heard of so prodigious  
 " an inhabitant of the waters, who, like thee,  
 " has filled up, in a single day, a lake an hun-  
 " dred leagues in circumference. Surely, thou  
 " art BHAGAVAT, who appearest before me ;  
 " the great HERI, whose dwelling was on the  
 " waves ; and who now, in compassion to thy  
 " servants, bearest the form of the natives of  
 " the deep. Salutation and praise to thee, O  
 " first male, the lord of creation, of pre-  
 " servation, of destruction ! Thou art the  
 C " highest



“ highest object, O supreme ruler, of us  
“ thy adorers, who piously seek thee. All  
“ thy delusive descents in this world give  
“ existence to various beings : yet I am anxious  
“ to know, for what cause that shape has been  
“ assumed by thee. Let me not, O lotos-  
“ eyed, approach in vain the feet of a deity,  
“ whose perfect benevolence has been extended  
“ to all ; when thou hast shown us to our amaze-  
“ ment the appearance of other bodies, not in  
“ reality existing, but successively exhibited.”  
“ The lord of the universe, loving the pious  
“ man who thus implored him, and intend-  
“ ing to preserve him from the sea of destruc-  
“ tion, caused by the depravity of the age, thus  
“ told him how he was to act. “ In seven  
“ days from the present time, O thou tamer  
“ of enemies, the three worlds will be plunged  
“ in an ocean of death ; but, in the midst of  
“ the destroying waves, a large vessel, sent by  
“ me for thy use, shall stand before thee.  
“ Then shalt thou take all medicinal herbs, all  
“ the variety of seeds, and, accompanied by  
“ seven saints, encircled by pairs of all brute  
“ animals, thou shalt enter the spacious ark,  
“ and continue in it, secure from the flood, on  
“ one immense ocean without light, except  
“ the radiance of thy holy companions. When  
“ the ship shall be agitated by an impetuous  
“ wind,

“ wind, thou shalt fasten it with a large sea-  
 “ serpent on my horn ; for I will be near thee :  
 “ drawing the vessel, with thee and thy attend-  
 “ ants, I will remain on the ocean, O chief of  
 “ men, until a night of BRAHMA shall be com-  
 “ pletely ended. Thou shalt then know my true  
 “ greatness, rightly named the supreme God-  
 “ head ; by my favour, all thy questions shall  
 “ be answered, and thy mind abundantly in-  
 “ structed.” HERT, having thus directed the  
 “ monarch, disappeared ; and SATYAVRATA  
 “ humbly waited for the time, which the ruler  
 “ of our senses had appointed. The pious  
 “ king, having scattered toward the East the  
 “ pointed blades of the grass *darbba*, and turn-  
 “ ing his face toward the North, sat medita-  
 “ ting on the feet of the God, who had borne  
 “ the form of a fish. The sea overwhelming  
 “ its shores, deluged the whole earth ; and it  
 “ was soon perceived to be augmented by  
 “ showers from immense clouds. He, still  
 “ meditating on the command of BHAGAVAT,  
 “ saw the vessel advancing, and entered it with  
 “ the chiefs of *Bráhmans*, having carried into  
 “ it the medicinal creepers, and conformed to  
 “ the directions of HERT. The saints thus ad-  
 “ dressed him : “ O king, meditate on CE-  
 “ SAVA ; who will, surely, deliver us from  
 “ this danger, and grant us prosperity.” The  
 C 2 God,

' God, being invoked by the monarch, ap-  
 ' peared again distinctly on the vast ocean in the  
 ' form of a fish, blazing like gold, extending a  
 ' million of leagues, with one stupendous horn ;  
 ' on which the king, as he had before been  
 ' commanded by *HERI*, tied the ship with a  
 ' cable made of a vast serpent, and happy in  
 ' his preservation, stood praising the destroyer  
 ' of *MADHU*. When the monarch had finished  
 ' his hymn, the primeval male, *BHAGAVAT*,  
 ' who watched for his safety on the great ex-  
 ' pansé of water, spoke aloud to his own di-  
 ' vine essence, pronouncing a sacred *Purána*,  
 ' which contained the rules of the *Sánc'hya*  
 ' philosophy : but it was an infinite mystery, to  
 ' be concealed within the breast of *SATYA-*  
 ' *VRATA* ; who, sitting in the vessel with the  
 ' saints, heard the principle of the soul, the  
 ' Eternal Being, proclaimed by the preserving  
 ' power. Then *HERI*, rising together with  
 ' *BRA'HMA* from the destructive deluge, which  
 ' was abated, slew the demon *HAYAGRI'VA*,  
 ' and recovered the sacred books. *SATYA-*  
 ' *VRATA*, instructed in all divine and human  
 ' knowledge, was appointed in the present  
 ' *Calpa*, by the favour of *VISHNU*, the seventh  
 ' *MENU*, surnamed *VAIVASWATA* : but the  
 ' appearance of a horned fish to the religious  
 ' monarch was *Máya*, or delusion ; and he  
 ' who

‘ who shall devoutly hear this important allegorical narrative, will be delivered from the bondage of sin.’

THIS epitome of the first *Indian* History that is now extant, appears to me very curious and very important; for the story, though whimsically dressed up in the form of an allegory, seems to prove a primeval tradition in this country of the *universal deluge* described by MOSES, and fixes consequently the *time*, when the genuine *Hindu* Chronology actually begins. We find, it is true, in the *Purân*, from which the narrative is extracted, *another deluge*, which happened towards the close of the *third* age, when YUDHISHTH’IR was labouring under the persecution of his inveterate foe DURYO’DAN, and when CHRISHNA, who had recently become incarnate for the purpose of succouring the pious and of destroying the wicked, was performing wonders in the country of *Mat’burâ*; but the second flood was merely *local*, and intended only to affect the people of *Vraja*: they, it seems, had offended INDRA, the God of the firmament, by their enthusiastic adoration of the wonderful child, “ who lifted up the  
“ mountain *Goverdbena* as if it had been a  
“ flower, and by sheltering all the herdsmen  
“ and shepherdesses from the storm, convinced  
“ INDRA of his supremacy.” That the *Satya*,



or (if we may venture so to call it) the *Saturnian*, age was in truth the age of the *general* flood, will appear from a close examination of the ten *Avatárs*, or *Descents*, of the deity in his capacity of preserver; since of the four, which are declared to have happened in the *Satyayug*, the *three first* apparently relate to some stupendous convulsion of our globe from the fountains of the deep, and the fourth exhibits the miraculous punishment of pride and impiety. First, as we have shown, there was, in the opinion of the *Hindus*, an interposition of Providence to preserve a devout person and his family (for all the *Pandits* agree, that his wife, though not named, must be understood to have been saved with him) from an inundation, by which all the wicked were destroyed; next, the power of the deity descends in the form of a *Boar*, the symbol of strength, to draw up and support on his tusks the whole earth, which had been sunk beneath the ocean; thirdly, the same power is represented as a *tortoise* sustaining the globe, which had been convulsed by the violent assaults of demons, while the Gods churned the sea with the mountain *Mandar*, and forced it to disgorge the sacred things and animals, together with the water of life, which it had swallowed. These three stories relate, I think, to the same event, shadowed by a moral,

ral, a metaphysical, and an astronomical allegory; and all three seem connected with the hieroglyphical sculptures of the old *Egyptians*. The fourth *Avatâr* was a *lion* issuing from a bursting column of marble to devour a blaspheming monarch, who would otherwise have slain his religious son; and of the remaining six, not one has the least relation to a deluge: the three, which are ascribed to the *Trêtâyug*, when tyranny and irreligion are said to have been introduced, were ordained for the overthrow of tyrants, or, their natural types, giants with a thousand arms formed for the most extensive oppression; and, in the *Dwâparyug*, the incarnation of CRISHNA was partly for a similar purpose, and partly with a view to thin the world of unjust and impious men, who had multiplied in that age, and began to swarm on the approach of the *Caliyug*, or the age of contention and baseness. As to BUDDHA, he seems to have been a reformer of the doctrines contained in the *Vêdas*; and though his good-nature led him to censure those antient books, because they enjoined sacrifices of cattle, yet he is admitted as the ninth *Avatâr* even by the *Brâhmans* of *Câst*, and his praises are sung by the poet JAYADE'VA: his character is in many respects very extraordinary; but as an account of it belongs rather to History than to Mythology,

logy, it is reserved for another Dissertation. The tenth *Avatar*, we are told, is yet to come, and is expected to appear mounted (like the crowned conqueror in the *Apocalyps*) on a white horse, with a cimeter blazing like a comet to mow down all incorrigible and impenitent offenders, who shall then be on earth.

THESE four *Yugs* have so apparent an affinity with the *Grecian* and *Roman* ages, that one origin may be naturally assigned to both systems: the first in both is distinguished as abounding in *god*, though *Satya* mean *truth* and *probity*, which were found, if ever, in the times immediately following so tremendous an exertion of the divine power as the destruction of mankind by a general deluge; the next is characterised by *silver*, and the third by *copper*; though their usual names allude to proportions imagined in each between vice and virtue: the present, or *earthen*, age seems more properly discriminated than by *iron*, as in antient *Europe*; since that metal is not baser or less useful, though more common in our times, and consequently less precious than copper; while mere *earth* conveys an idea of the lowest degradation. We may here observe, that the true History of the World seems obviously divisible into *four* ages or periods; which may be called, first, the *Diluvian* or purest age; namely, the times  
preced-

preceding the deluge, and those succeeding it till the mad introduction of idolatry at *Babel*; next, the *Patriarchal*, or pure age; in which, indeed, there were mighty hunters of beasts and of men, from the rise of patriarchs in the family of SEM, to the simultaneous establishment of great empires by the descendants of his brother HA'M; thirdly, the *Mosaick*, or less pure age, from the legation of MOSES, and during the time when his ordinances were comparatively well-observed and uncorrupted; lastly, the *Prophetical*, or *impure*, age, beginning with the vehement warnings given by the Prophets to apostate Kings and degenerate nations, but still subsisting and to subsist, until all genuine prophecies shall be fully accomplished. The duration of the historical ages must needs be very unequal and disproportionate; while that of the *Indian Yugs* is disposed so regularly and artificially, that it cannot be admitted as natural or probable: men do not become reprobate in a geometrical progression, or at the termination of regular periods; yet so well proportioned are the *Yugs*, that even the length of human life is diminished, as they advance, from an hundred thousand years in a subdecuple ratio; and as the number of principal *Avatârs* in each decreases arithmetically from four, so the number of years in each decreases



creases geometrically, and all together constitute the extravagant sum of four million three hundred and twenty thousand years; which aggregate, multiplied by seventy-one, is the period in which every MENV is believed to preside over the world. Such a period, one might conceive, would have satisfied ARCHYTAS, the *measurer of sea and earth, and the numberer of their sands*, or ARCHIMEDES, who invented a notation that was capable of expressing the number of them; but the comprehensive mind of an *Indian* chronologist has no limits; and the reigns of fourteen MENVS are only a single day of BRAHMA', fifty of which days have elapsed, according to the *Hindus*, from the time of the Creation. That all this puerility, as it seems at first view, may be only an astronomical riddle, and allude to the apparent revolution of the fixed stars, of which the *Bráhmans* made a mystery, I readily admit, and am even inclined to believe; but so technical an arrangement excludes all idea of serious History. I am sensible how much these remarks will offend the warm advocates for *Indian* antiquity; but we must not sacrifice truth to a base fear of giving offence. That the *Védas* were actually written before the flood I shall never believe; nor can we infer from the preceding story, that the learned *Hindus* believe it; for the allegorical  
flum-



slumber of BRAHMA' and the theft of the sacred books mean only, in simpler language, that *the human race was become corrupt*; but that the *Vēdas* are very antient, and far older than other *Sanſcrit* compositions, I will venture to assert from my own examination of them, and a comparison of their style with that of the *Purāns* and the *Dherma Śāstra*. A similar comparison justifies me in pronouncing, that the excellent law-book ascribed to SWA'YAMBHUVA MENU, though not even pretended to have been written by him, is more antient than the BHA'GAVAT; but that it was composed in the first age of the world, the *Brāhmans* would find it hard to persuade me; and the date, which has been assigned to it, does not appear in either of the two copies which I possess, or in any other that has been collated for me: in fact, the supposed date is comprised in a verse which flatly contradicts the work itself; for it was not MENU who composed the system of law, by the command of his father BRAHMA', but a holy personage or demigod, named BHṚIGU, who revealed to men what MENU had delivered at the request of him and other saints or patriarchs. In the *Mānava Śāstra*, to conclude this digression, the measure is so uniform and melodious, and the style so perfectly *Sanſcrit* or *Polished*, that the book must be more modern than

than the scriptures of MOSES, in which the simplicity, or rather nakedness, of the *Hebrew* dialect, metre, and style, must convince every unbiassed man of their superior antiquity.

I LEAVE etymologists, who decide every thing, to decide whether the word MENU, or, in the nominative case, MENUS, has any connection with MINOS, the Lawgiver, and supposed son of JOVE: the *Cretans*, according to DIODORUS of *Sicily*, used to feign, that most of the great men who had been deified in return for the benefits which they had conferred on mankind, were born in their island; and hence a doubt may be raised, whether MINOS was really a *Cretan*. The *Indian* legislator was the first, not the seventh MENU, or SATYAVRATA, whom I suppose to be the SATURN of *Italy*: part of SATURN's character, indeed was that of a great lawgiver,

*Qui genus indocile ac dispersum monibus altis  
Composuit, legesque dedit;*

and we may suspect, that all the fourteen MENUS are reducible to one, who was called NUN by the *Arabs*, and probably by the *Hebrews*, though we have disguised his name by an improper pronunciation of it. Some near relation between the seventh MENU and the *Grecian* MINOS may be inferred from the singular character

character of the *Hindu* God YAMA, who was also a child of the Sun, and thence named VAI-VASWATA: he had too the same title with his brother SRA'DDHADÉ'VA; another of his titles was DHERMARA'JA, or *King of Justice*; and a third, PITRIPETI, or *Lord of the Patriarchs*; but he is chiefly distinguished as *judge of departed souls*; for the *Hindus* believe, that when a soul leaves its body, it immediately repairs to *Yamapur*, or the city of YAMA, where it receives a just sentence from him, and either ascends to *Swerga*, or the first heaven, or is driven down to *Narac*, the region of serpents, or assumes on earth the form of some animal, unless its offence had been such, that it ought to be condemned to a vegetable, or even to a mineral, prison. Another of his names is very remarkable: I mean that of CA'LA, or *time*, the idea of which is intimately blended with the characters of SATURN and of NOAH; for the name CRONOS has a manifest affinity with the word *chronos*; and a learned follower of ZERATUSHT assures me, that in the books which the *Behdins* hold sacred, mention is made of an *universal inundation*, there named the deluge of TIME.

It having been occasionally observed, that CERES was the poetical daughter of SATURN, we cannot close this head without adding, that  
the

the *Hindus* also have their *Goddeſs of Abundance*, whom they uſually call *LACSHMI'*, and whom they conſider as the daughter (not of *MENU*, but) of *BHRIGU*, by whom the firſt Code of ſacred ordinances was promulgated: ſhe is alſo named *PEDMA'* and *CAMALA'* from the ſacred *LOTOS* or *Nymphæa*; but her moſt remarkable name is *SRI'*, or, in the firſt caſe, *SRI's*; which has a reſemblance to the *Latin*, and means *fortune* or *proſperity*. It may be contended, that, although *LACSHMI'* may be figuratively called the *CERES* of *Hinduſtan*, yet any two or more idolatrous nations, who ſubſiſted by agriculture, might naturally conceive a Deity to preſide over their labours, without having the leaſt intercourſe with each other; but no reaſon appears, why two nations ſhould concur in ſuppoſing that Deity to be a female: one at leaſt of them would be more likely to imagine, that the *Earth* was a Goddeſs, and that the God of abundance rendered her fertile. Beſides, in very ancient temples near *Gayá*, we ſee images of *LACSHMI'*, with full breasts and a cord twiſted under her arm like a *horn of plenty*, which look very much like the old *Grecian* and *Roman* figures of *CERES*.

THE fable of *SATURN* having been thus analyſed, let us proceed to his deſcendants; and begin, as the Poet adviſes, with *JUPITER*,  
 whoſe



whose supremacy, thunder, and libertinism, every boy learns from OVID; while his great offices of Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, are not generally considered in the systems of *European* mythology. The *Romans* had, as we have before observed, many JUPITERS, one of whom was only the *Firmament* personified, as ENNIUS clearly expresses it:

*Aspice hoc sublime cudent, quem invocant omnes Jovem.*

This JUPITER or DIESPITER, is the *Indian* God of the visible heavens, called INDRA, or the *King*, and DIVESPETIR, or *Lord of the Sky*, who has also the character of the *Roman* GENIUS, or Chief of the good spirits; but most of his epithets in *Sanscrit* are the same with those of the *Ennian* JOVE. His consort is named SACHI'; his celestial city, *Amarāvati*; his palace, *Vaijayanta*; his garden, *Nandāna*; his chief elephant, *Airāvāt*; his charioteer, MATA'LI; and his weapon, *Vajra*, or the thunderbolt: he is the regent of winds and showers, and, though the East is peculiarly under his care, yet his *Olympus* is *Mēru*, or the north pole allegorically represented as a mountain of gold and gems. With all his power he is considered as a subordinate Deity, and far inferior to the *Indian* Triad, BRAHMA', VISH-  
NU,



NU, and MAHA'DEVA or SIVA, who are three forms of one and the same Godhead : thus the principal divinity of the *Greeks* and *Latians*, whom they called ZEUS and JUPITER with irregular inflexions DIOS and JOVIS, was not merely *Fulminator*, the Thunderer, but, like the destroying power of *India*, MAGNUS DIVUS, ULTOR, GENITOR ; like the preserving power, CONSERVATOR, SOTER, OPITULUS, ALTOR, RUMINUS ; and like the creating power, the *Giver of Life* ; an attribute, which I mention here on the authority of CORNUTUS, a consummate master of mythological learning. We are advised by PLATO himself to search for the roots of *Greek* words in some barbarous, that is, foreign soil ; but, since I look upon etymological conjectures as a weak basis for historical enquiries, I hardly dare suggest, that ZEV, SIV, and JOV, are the same syllable differently pronounced : it must, however be admitted, that the *Greeks* having no palatial *sigma*, like that of the *Indians*, might have expressed it by their *zeta*, and that the initial letters of *zugon* and *jugum* are (as the instance proves) easily interchangeable.

LET us now descend, from these general and introductory remarks, to some particular observations on the resemblance of ZEUS or  
JUPITER

JUPITER to the triple divinity VISHNU, SIVA, BRAHMA'; for that is the order in which they are expressed by the letters A, U, and M, which coalesce and form the mystical word O'M; a word which never escapes the lips of a pious *Hindu*, who meditates on it in silence: whether the *Egyptian* ON, which is commonly supposed to mean the Sun, be the *Sanscrit* monosyllable, I leave others to determine. It must always be remembered, that the learned *Indians*, as they are instructed by their own books, in truth acknowledge only One Supreme Being, whom they call BRAHME, or THE GREAT ONE, in the neuter gender: they believe his Essence to be infinitely removed from the comprehension of any mind but his own; and they suppose him to manifest his power by the operation of his divine spirit, whom they name VISHNU, the *Pervader*, and NA'RA'YAN, or *Moving on the waters*, both in the masculine gender, whence he is often denominated the *First Male*; and by this power they believe, that the whole order of nature is preserved and supported; but the *Vedantis*, unable to form a distinct idea of brute matter independent of mind, or to conceive that the work of Supreme Goodness was left a moment to itself, imagine that the Deity is ever present to

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his

his work, and constantly supports a series of perceptions, which, in one sense, they call *illusory*, though they cannot but admit the *reality* of all created forms, as far as the happiness of creatures can be affected by them. When they consider the divine power exerted in *creating*, or in giving existence to that which existed not before, they call the Deity BRAHMA' in the masculine gender also; and when they view him in the light of *Destroyer*, or rather *Changer* of forms, they give him a thousand names, of which SIVA, I'SA or I'SWARA, RUDRA, HARA, SAMBHU, and MAHA'DE'VA or MAHE'SA, are the most common. The first operations of these three *Powers* are variously described in the different *Purānas* by a number of allegories, and from them we may deduce the *Ionian* Philosophy of *primeval water*, the doctrine of the Mundane Egg, and the veneration paid to the *Nymphæa*, or *Lotos*, which was anciently revered in *Egypt*, as it is at present in *Hindustan*, *Tibet*, and *Nepal*: the *Tibetians* are said to embellish their temples and altars with it, and a native of *Nepal* made prostrations before it on entering my study, where the fine plant and beautiful flowers lay for examination. Mr. HOLWELL, in explaining his first plate, supposes BRAHMA' to be floating on a leaf of *betel* in the midst of the abyss;

abyss; but it was manifestly intended by a bad painter for a lotos-leaf or for that of the *Indian* fig-tree; nor is the species of pepper, known in *Bengal* by the name of *Támbúla*, and on the coast of *Malabar* by that of *Betel*, held sacred, as he asserts, by the *Hindus*, or necessarily cultivated under the inspection of *Bráhmans*; though as the vines are tender, all the plantations of them are carefully secured, and ought to be cultivated by a particular tribe of *Súdras*, who are thence called *Támbúli's*.

THAT *water* was the primitive element and first work of the Creative Power, is the uniform opinion of the *Indian* Philosophers; but, as they give so particular an account of the general deluge and of the Creation, it can never be admitted, that their whole system arose from traditions concerning the Flood only, and must appear indubitable, that their doctrine is in part borrowed from the opening of *Birárit* or *Genesis*, than which a sublimer passage, from the first word to the last, never flowed or will flow from any human pen: “*In the beginning GOD*  
 “*created the heavens and the earth.—And the*  
 “*earth was void and waste, and darkness was*  
 “*on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of*  
 “*GOD moved upon the face of the waters; and*  
 “*GOD said: Let Light be—and Light was.*”

The sublimity of this passage is considerably diminished



nished by the *Indian* paraphrase of it, with which MENU, the son of BRAHMA', begins his address to the sages, who consulted him on the formation of the universe: "This world," says he, "was  
 " all darkness, undiscernible, undistinguishable,  
 " altogether as in a profound sleep; till the self-  
 " existent invisible God, making it manifest  
 " with five elements and other glorious forms,  
 " perfectly dispelled the gloom. He, desiring  
 " to raise up various creatures by an emanation  
 " from his own glory, first created the *waters*,  
 " and impressed them with a power of motion:  
 " by that power was produced a golden  
 " egg, blazing like a thousand suns, in which  
 " was born BRAHMA', self-existing, the great  
 " parent of all rational Beings. The waters  
 " are called *nārā*, since they are the offspring  
 " of NERA (or *īswara*); and thence was  
 " NA'RA'YANA named, because his first *ayana*,  
 " or *moving*, was on them.

" THAT WHICH is, the invisible cause, eternal, self-existing, but unperceived, becoming masculine *from neuter*, is celebrated  
 " among all creatures by the name of BRAHMA'. That God, having dwelled in the  
 " Egg, through revolving years, Himself meditating on Himself, divided it into two equal  
 " parts; and from those halves formed the  
 " heavens and the earth, placing in the midst  
 " the



“ the subtile ether, the eight points of the  
 “ world, and the permanent receptacle of  
 “ waters ”

To this curious description, with which the *Mānava Śāstra* begins, I cannot refrain from subjoining the four verses, which are the text of the *Bhāgavat*, and are believed to have been pronounced by the Supreme Being to BRAHMA': the following version is most scrupulously literal.

“ EVEN I was even at first, not any other  
 “ thing; that, which exists, unperceived; supreme: afterwards I AM THAT WHICH IS;  
 “ and he, who must remain, am I.

“ EXCEPT the FIRST CAUSE, whatever  
 “ may appear, and may not appear, in the  
 “ mind, know that to be the mind's MA'YA',  
 “ (or *Delusion*) as light, as darkness.

“ As the great elements are in various beings, entering, yet not entering (that is, pervading, not destroying), thus am I in them, yet not in them.

“ EVEN thus far may enquiry be made by him, who seeks to know the principle of mind, in union and separation, which must be EVERY WHERE ALWAYS.”

WILD and obscure as these ancient verses must appear in a naked verbal translation, it

will perhaps be thought by many, that the poetry or mythology of *Greece* or *Italy* afford no conceptions more awfully magnificent : yet the brevity and simplicity of the *Mosaic* diction are unequalled.

As to the creation of the world, in the opinion of the *Romans*, *OVID*, who might naturally have been expected to describe it with learning and elegance, leaves us wholly in the dark, *which of the Gods was the actor in it* : other Mythologists are more explicit ; and we may rely on the authority of *CORNUTUS*, that the old *European* heathens considered *Jove* (not the son of *SATURN*, but of the *Ether*, that is, of an unknown parent) as the great *Life-giver*, and *Father of Gods and Men* ; to which may be added the *Orphean* doctrine, preserved by *PROCLUS*, that “ the abyss and empyreum, the earth and sea, the Gods and Goddeſſes, were produced by *ZEUS* or *JUPITER*.” In this character he corresponds with *BRAHMA* ; and, perhaps, with that God of the *Babylonians* (if we can rely on the accounts of their ancient religion), who, like *BRAHMA*, reduced the universe to order, and like *BRAHMA*, *lost his head*, with the blood of which new animals were instantly formed : I allude to the common story, the meaning of which I cannot discover, that

*BRAHMA*

BRAHMA' had five heads till one of them was cut off by NA'RA'YA'N.

THAT, in another capacity, JOVE was the *Helper and Supporter* of all, we may collect from his old *Latin* epithets, and from CICE'RO, who informs us, that his usual name is a contraction of *Juvans Pater*; an etymology, which shews the idea entertained of his character, though we may have some doubts of its accuracy. CALLIMACHUS, we know, addresses him as *the bestower of all good, and of security from grief*; and, *since neither wealth without virtue, nor virtue without wealth, give complete happiness*, he prays, like a wise poet, for both. An *Indian* prayer for riches would be directed to LACSHMI', the wife of VISHNU, since the *Hindu* goddesses are believed to be the *powers* of their respective lords: as to CUVE'RA, the *Indian* PLUTUS, one of whose names in *Paulastya*, he is revered, indeed, as a magnificent Deity, residing in the palace of *Alaca*, or borne through the sky in a splendid car named *Pushpaca*, but is manifestly subordinate, like the other seven Genii, to the three principal Gods, or rather to the principal God considered in three capacities. As the soul of the world, or the pervading *mind*, so finely described by VIRGIL, we see JOVE represented by several *Roman*

poets; and with great sublimity by LUCAN in the known speech of CATO concerning the *Ammonian* oracle, "JUPITER is, wherever we look, wherever we move." This is precisely the *Indian* idea of VISHNU, according to the four verses above exhibited; not that the *Bráhmans* imagine their male Divinity to be the *divine Essence* of the great one, which they declare to be wholly incomprehensible; but, since the power of *preserving* created things by a superintending Providence, belongs eminently to the Godhead, they hold that power to exist transcendently in the *preserving* member of the Triad, whom they suppose to be EVERY WHERE ALWAYS, not in substance, but in spirit and energy: here, however, I speak of the *Vaishnavas*; for the *Sarvas* ascribe a sort of pre-eminence to SIVA, whose attributes are now to be concisely examined.

It was in the capacity of Avenger and Destroyer, that JOVE encountered and overthrew the *Titans* and *Gigants*, whom TYPHON, BRIAREUS, TITYUS, and the rest of their fraternity, led against the God of *Olympus*; to whom an Eagle brought lightning and thunderbolts during the warfare: thus, in a similar contest between SIVA and the *Daitys*, or children of DITI, who frequently rebelled against heaven, BRAHMA'



MA' is believed to have presented the God of Destruction with *fiery shafts*. One of the many poems entitled *Rāmāyan*, the last book of which has been translated into *Italian*, contains an extraordinary dialogue between the crow *Bhushunda*, and a rational Eagle, named GARUDA, who is often painted with the face of a beautiful youth and the body of an imaginary bird; and one of the eighteen *Purānas* bears his name and comprizes his whole history. M. SONNERAT informs us, that VISHNU is represented in some places riding on the GARUDA, which he supposes to be the *Pondicheri* Eagle of BRITSON, especially as the *Brāhmins* of the Coast highly venerate that class of birds, and provide food for numbers of them at stated hours: I rather conceive the *Garūda* to be a fabulous bird, but agree with him, that the *Hindu* God, who rides on it, resembles the ancient JUPITER. In the old temples at *Gaya*, VISHNU is either mounted on this poetical bird, or attended by it, together with a little page; but, lest an etymologist should find GANYMID in GARUD, I must observe, that the *Sanscrit* word is pronounced *Garura*; though I admit, that the *Grecian* and *Indian* stories of the celestial bird and the page appear to have some resemblance. As the *Olympian* JUPITER fixed his court and held his councils



councils on a lofty and brilliant mountain, for the appropriated seat of MAHA'DE'VA, whom the *Saiva's* consider as the Chief of the Deities, was mount *Cailāsa*, every splinter of whose rocks was an inestimable gem: his terrestrial haunts are the snowy hills of *Himālaya*, or that branch of them to the East of the *Brahmaputra*, which has the name of *Cbandrasic'hara*, or the *Mountain of the Moon*. When, after all these circumstances, we learn that SIVA is believed to have *three eyes*, whence he is named also TRILO'CHAN, and know from PAUSANIAS, not only that *Triophthalmos* was an epithet of ZEUS, but that a statue of him had been found so early as the taking of *Troy* with a *third eye in his forehead*, as we see him represented by the *Hindus*, we must conclude, that the identity of the two Gods falls little short of being demonstrated.

IN the character of *Destroyer* also we may look upon this *Indian Deity* as corresponding with the *Stygian Jove*, or PLUTO; especially since CA'LI', or *Time* in the feminine gender, is a name of his consort, who will appear hereafter to be PROSERPINE: indeed, if we can rely on a *Persian* translation of the *Bhāgavat* (for the original is not yet in my possession), the sovereign of *Patāla*, or the *Infernal Regions*, is the *King of Serpents*, named SE'SHANA'GA; for  
CRISHNA

CRISHNA is there said to have descended with his favourite ARJUN to the seat of that formidable divinity, from whom he instantly obtained the favour which he requested, that the souls of a *Brâhman's* six sons, who had been slain in battle, might reanimate their respective bodies; and SE'SHANA'GA is thus described; "He had a gorgeous appearance, with a thousand heads, and on each of them a crown set with resplendent gems, one of which was larger and brighter than the rest; his eyes gleamed like flaming torches; but his neck, his tongues, and his body were black; the skirts of his habiliment were yellow, and a sparkling jewel hung in every one of his ears; his arms were extended, and adorned with rich bracelets, and his hands bore the holy shell, the radiated weapon, the mace for war, and the lotos." Thus PLUTO was often exhibited in painting and sculpture with a diadem and sceptre; but himself and his equipage were of the blackest shade.

THERE is yet another attribute of MAHA'DE'VA, by which he is too visibly distinguished in the drawings and temples of *Bengal*. To destroy, according to the *Vedânt's* of *India*, the *Sûfi's* of *Persia*, and many Philosophers of our *European* schools, is only to generate and reproduce in another form: hence the God of Destruction

*Jiruction* is holden in this country to preside over *Generation*; as a symbol of which he rides on a *white bull*. Can we doubt that the loves and feats of JUPITER GENITOR (not forgetting the *white bull* of EUROPA) and his extraordinary title of LAPIS, for which no satisfactory reason is commonly given, have a connection with the *Indian Philosophy* and *Mythology*? As to the deity of *Lampsacus*, he was originally a mere scarecrow, and ought not to have a place in any mythological system; and in regard to BACCHUS, the God of *Vintage* (between whose acts and those of JUPITER we find, as BACON observes, a wonderful affinity), his *Itthyphallick* images, measures, and ceremonies alluded probably to the supposed relation of Love and Wine; unless we believe them to have belonged originally to SIVA, one of whose names is *Vâgis* or *Ba'gi's*, and to have been afterwards improperly applied. Though, in an *Essay on the Gods of India*, where the *Brâhman*s are positively forbidden to taste fermented liquors, we can have little to do with BACCHUS, as God of Wine, who was probably no more than the imaginary president over the vintage in *Italy*, *Greece*, and the *Lower Asia*, yet we must not omit SURÂ'DE'VI', the Goddess of Wine, who arose, say the *Hindus*, from the ocean, when it was churned with the mountain *Mandar*;

*Mandar* : and this fable seems to indicate, that the *Indians* came from a country in which wine was antiently made and considered as a blessing ; though the dangerous effects of intemperance induced their early legislators to prohibit the use of all spirituous liquors ; and it were much to be wished that so wise a law had never been violated.

HERE may be introduced the *JUPITER Marinus*, or *NEPTUNE*, of the *Romans*, as resembling *MAHA'DE'VA* in his *generative* character ; especially as the *Hindu* God is the husband of *BHAVA'NI*, whose relation to the *waters* is evidently marked by her image being restored to them at the conclusion of her great festival called *Durgotsava* : she is known also to have attributes exactly similar to those of *VENUS Marina*, whose birth from the sea-foam and splendid rise from the Conch, in which she had been cradled, have afforded so many charming subjects to antient and modern artists ; and it is very remarkable, that the *REMBHA'* of *INDRA*'s court, who seems to correspond with the popular *VENUS*, or Goddess of Beauty, was produced, according to the *Indian* Fabulists, from the froth of the churned ocean. The identity of the *trifula* and the *trident*, the weapon of *SIVA* and of *NEPTUNE*, seems to establish this analogy ; and the veneration paid all  
over



over *India* to the large buccinum, especially when it can be found with the spiral line and mouth turned from left to right, brings instantly to our mind the music of TRITON. The Genius of Water is VARUNA; but he, like the rest, is far inferior to MAHE'SA', and even to INDRA, who is the Prince of the beneficent genii.

THIS way of considering the Gods as individual substances, but as distinct persons in distinct characters, is common to the *European* and *Indian* systems; as well as the custom of giving the highest of them the greatest number of names: hence, not to repeat what has been said of JUPITER, came the triple capacity of DIANA; and hence her petition in CALLIMACHUS, that she might be *polyonymous* or *many-titled*. The consort of SIVA is more eminently marked by these distinctions than those of BRAHMA' or VISHNU: she resembles the Isis *Myrionymos*, to whom an ancient marble, described by GRÜTER, is dedicated; but her leading names and characters are PA'RVATI', DURGA', BHAVA'NI'.

As the *Mountain-born* Goddess, or PA'RVATI', she has many properties of the *Olympian* JUNO: her majestic deportment, high spirit, and general attributes are the same; and we find her, both on Mount *Cailōsa*, and at the banquets  
of



of the Deities, uniformly the companion of her husband. One circumstance in the parallel is extremely singular: she is usually attended by her son CA'RTICE'YA, who rides on a *peacock*; and, in some drawings, his own robe seems to be spangled with eyes; to which must be added that, in some of her temples, a *peacock*, without a rider, stands near her image. Though CA'RTICE'YA, with his six faces and numerous eyes, bears some resemblance to ARGUS, whom JUNO employed as her principal wardour, yet, as he is a Deity of the second class, and the Commander of celestial Armies, he seems clearly to be the ORUS of *Egypt* and the MARS of *Italy*: his name SCANDA, by which he is celebrated in one of the *Parânas*, has a connection, I am persuaded, with the old SECANDER of *Persia*, whom the poets ridiculously confound with the *Macedonian*.

THE attributes of DURGA', or *difficult of access*, are also conspicuous in the festival above-mentioned, which is called by her name; and in this character she resembles MINERVA, not the peaceful inventress of the fine and useful arts, but PALLAS, armed with a helmet and spear: both represent heroic *Virtue*, or *Valour* united with *Wisdom*; both slew Demons and Giants with their own hands; and both protected the wise and virtuous who paid them due

due adoration. As PALLAS, they say, takes her name from *vibrating* a lance, and usually appears in complete armour, thus CURIS, the old *Latian* word for a spear, was one of JUNO's titles; and so, if GERALDUS be correct, was HOPLUSMIA, which at *Elis*, it seems, meant a female dressed in panoply or complete accoutrements. The *unarmed* MINERVA of the *Romans* apparently corresponds, as patroness of Science and Genius, with SERESWATI', the wife of BRAHMA', and the emblem of his principal *Creative Power*: both goddesses have given their names to celebrated grammatical works; but the *Sāreswata* of SARU'PA'CHA'RYA is far more concise as well as more useful and agreeable than the *Minerva* of SANCTIUS. The MINERVA of *Italy* invented the *flute*, and SERESWATI' presides over melody: the protectress of *Athens* was even, on the same account, surnamed MUSICK'.

MANY learned Mythologists, with GERALDUS at their head, consider the peaceful MINERVA as the *Isis* of *Egypt*; from whose temple at *Sais* a wonderful inscription is quoted by PLUTARCH, which has a resemblance to the four *Sanscrit* verses above exhibited as the text of the *Bhāgavat*: "I am all, that hath been, and is, and shall be; and my veil no mortal hath ever removed." For my part I have no doubt,

doubt, that the *I'SWARA* and *I'SI'* of the *Hindus* are the *OSIRIS* and *ISIS* of the *Egyptians*; though a distinct essay in the manner of *PLUTARCH* would be requisite in order to demonstrate their identity: they mean, I conceive, the *Powers of Nature* considered as Male and Female; and *ISIS*, like the other goddesses, represents the active power of her lord, whose eight forms, under which he becomes visible to man, were thus enumerated by *CALIDA'SA* near two thousand years ago: "*Water* was the  
 " first work of the Creator; and *Fire* receives  
 " the oblation of clarified butter, as the law  
 " ordains; the *Sacrifice* is performed with so-  
 " lemnity; the *two Lights* of heaven distin-  
 " guish time; the subtile *Ether*, which is the  
 " vehicle of sound, pervades the universe;  
 " the *Earth* is the natural parent of all in-  
 " crease; and by *Air* all things breathing are  
 " animated: may *I'SA*, the power propitiously  
 " apparent in these eight forms, bless and sus-  
 " tain you!" The *five* elements therefore, as well as the Sun and Moon, are considered as *I'SA* or the *Ruler*, from which word *I' I'* may be regularly formed, though *I'SA' I'* be the usual name of his *active Power*, adored as the Goddess of Nature. I have not yet found in *Sanscrit* the wild, though poetical, tale of *Io*; but am persuaded, that, by means of the *Puranas*,

we shall in time discover all the learning of the *Egyptians* without decyphering their hieroglyphics : the bull of I'SWARA seems to be APIS or AP, as he is more correctly named in the true reading of a passage in JEREMIAH ; and if the veneration shewn both in *Tibet* and *India* to so amiable and useful a quadruped as the Cow, together with the *regeneration* of the LAMA himself, have not some affinity with the religion of *Egypt* and the idolatry of *Israël*, we must at least allow that circumstances have wonderfully coincided. BHAVA'NI' now demands our attention ; and in this character I suppose the wife of MAHA'DEVA' to be as well the JUNO *Cinxia* or LUCINA of the *Romans* (called also by them DIANA *Solviziona*, and by the *Greeks* ILITHYIA) as VENUS herself ; not the *Idalian* queen of laughter and jollity, who, with her Nymphs and Graces, was the beautiful child of poetical imagination, and answers to the *Indian* REMBHA' with her celestial train of *Ap-sarâ's*, or damsels of paradise ; but VENUS *Urania*, so luxuriantly painted by LUCRETIVS, and so properly invoked by him at the opening of a poem on nature ; VENUS, presiding over *generation*, and, on that account, exhibited sometimes of both sexes, (an union very common in the *Indian* sculptures) as in her bearded statue at *Rome*, in the images perhaps called

*Hermathena,*



*Hermathena*, and in those figures of her which had the form of a *conical marble*; "for the reason of which figure we are left," says *TACITUS*, "in the dark:" the reason appears too clearly in the temples and paintings of *Hindustan*; where it never seems to have entered the heads of the legislators or people that any thing natural could be offensively obscene; a singularity, which pervades all their writings and conversation, but is no proof of depravity in their morals. Both *PLATO* and *CICERO* speak of *EROS*, or the heavenly *CUPID*, as the son of *VENUS* and *JUPITER*; which proves, that the monarch of *Olympus* and the Goddess of Fecundity were connected as *MAHA'DEVA* and *BHAVA'NI*; the God *CA'MA*, indeed, had *MA'YA'* and *CASYAPA*, or *Uranus*, for his parents, at least according to the Mythologists of *Cashmir*; but, in most respects, he seems the twin-brother of *CUPID* with richer and more lively appendages. One of his many epithets is *Dipaca*, the *Inflamer*, which is erroneously written *Dipuc*; and I am now convinced, that the sort of resemblance which has been observed between his *Latin* and *Sanskrit* names, is accidental: in each name the three first letters are the root, and between them there is no affinity. Whether any Mythological connection subsisted between the

*amaracus*, with the fragrant leaves of which HYMEN bound his temples, and the *tulasi* of *India*, must be left undetermined: the botanical relation of the two plants (if *amaracus* be properly translated *marjoram*) is extremely near.

ONE of the most remarkable ceremonies in the festival of the *Indian* Goddess is that before-mentioned of casting her image *into the river*: the *Pandits*, of whom I inquired concerning its origin and import, answered, “ that it was “ prescribed by the *Vêda*, they knew not “ why;” but this custom has, I conceive, a relation to the doctrine, that *water* is a *form* of I'SWARA, and consequently of I'SA'NI', who is even represented by some as the patroness of that element, to which her figure is restored, after having received all due honours on *earth*, which is considered as another *form* of the God of Nature, though subsequent, in the order of Creation, to the primeval fluid. There seems no decisive proof of one original system among idolatrous nations in the worship of river-gods and river-goddesses, nor in the homage paid to their streams, and the ideas of purification annexed to them; since *Greeks*, *Italians*, *Egyptians*, and *Hindus* might (without any communication with each other) have adored the several divinities of their great rivers, from  
which

which they derived pleasure, health, and abundance. The notion of DOCTOR MUSGRAVE, that large rivers were supposed, from their strength and rapidity, to be conducted by Gods, while rivulets only were protected by female deities, is, like most other notions of Grammarians on the genders of nouns, overthrown by facts. Most of the great *Indian* rivers are feminine; and the three goddesses of the waters whom the *Hindus* chiefly venerate, are GANGA', who sprang, like armed PALLAS, from the head of the *Indian* Jove; YAMUNA', daughter of the Sun, and SEHESWATI': all three meet at *Prayaga*, thence called *Triveni*, or *the three plaited locks*; but SERESWATI', according to the popular belief, sinks under ground, and rises at another *Triveni*, near *Hughli*, where she rejoins her beloved GANGA'. The *Bramaputra* is, indeed, a male river; and as his name signifies the son of BRAHMA', I thence took occasion to feign that he was married to GANGA', though I have not yet seen any mention of him, as a God, in the *Sanscrit* books.

Two incarnate deities of the first rank, RA'MA and CRISHNA, must now be introduced, and their several attributes distinctly explained. The first of them, I believe, was the DYONYSOS of the *Greeks*, whom they named BROMIUS,

without knowing why, and BUGENES, when they represented him *horned*, as well as LYAIOS and ELEUTHERIOS, the Deliverer, and TRIAMBOS or DITHYRAMBOS, the Triumphant: most of those titles were adopted by the Romans, by whom he was called BRUMA, TAURIFORMIS, LIBER, TRIUMPHUS; and both nations had records or traditionary accounts of his *giving laws* to men and deciding their contests, of his improving navigation and commerce, and, what may appear yet more observable, of his conquering *India* and other countries with an army of *Satyrs*, commanded by no less a personage than PAN; whom LILIUS GIRALDUS, on what authority I know not, asserts to have resided in *Iberia*, “when he had returned,” says the learned Mythologist, “from the *Indian* war, in which he accompanied BAUCHUS.” It were superfluous, in a mere essay, to run any length in the parallel between this *European* God and the sovereign of *Ayodhya*, whom the *Hindus* believe to have been an appearance on earth of the *Preserving Power*; to have been a Conqueror of the highest renown, and the Deliverer of nations from tyrants, as well as of his consort SI'TA' from the giant RA'VAN, king of *Lancá*, and to have commanded in chief a numerous and intrepid race of those large *Monkeys*, which our naturalists,



ralists, or some of them, have denominated *Indian* Satyrs: his General, the Prince of Satyrs, was named HANUMAT, or *with high cheek-bones*; and, with workmen of such agility, he soon raised a bridge of rocks over the sea, part of which, say the *Hindus*, yet remains; and it is, probably, the series of rocks, to which the *Muselmans* or the *Portuguese* have given the foolish name of ADAM's (it should be called RA'MA's) bridge. Might not this army of Satyrs have been only a race of mountaineers, whom RA'MA', if such a monarch ever existed, had civilized? However that may be, the large breed of *Indian* Apes is at this moment held in high veneration by the *Hindus*, and sed with devotion by the *Bráhmans*, who seem, in two or three places on the banks of the *Ganges*, to have a regular endowment for the support of them: they live in tribes of three or four hundred, are wonderfully gentle (I speak as an eye-witness), and appear to have some kind of order and subordination in their little sylvan polity. We must not omit, that the father of *Hanumat* was the God of Wind, named PAVAN, one of the eight Genii; and as PAN improved the pipe by adding six reeds, and "played exquisitely on the cithern a few moments after his birth," so one of the four systems of *Indian* music bears the name of

HANUMAT, or HANUMA'N in the nominative, as its inventor, and is now in general estimation.

THE war of *Lancā* is dramatically represented at the festival of RA'MA on the ninth day of the new moon of *Chaitra*; and the drama concludes (says HOLWELL, who had often seen it) with an exhibition of the fire-ordeal, by which the victor's wife SI'TA' gave proof of her connubial fidelity: "the dialogue," he adds, "is taken from one of the Eighteen holy books," meaning, I suppose, the *Purānas*; but the *Hindus* have a great number of regular dramas at least two thousand years old, and among them are several very fine ones on the story of RA'MA. The first poet of the *Hindus* was the great VALM'IC, and his *Rāmāyan* is an Epic Poem on the same subject, which, in unity of action, magnificence of imagery, and elegance of style, far surpasses the learned and elaborate work of NONNUS, entitled *Dionysiaca*, half of which, or twenty-four books, I perused with great eagerness, when I was very young, and should have travelled to the conclusion of it, if other pursuits had not engaged me. I shall never have leisure to compare the *Dionysiacks* with the *Rāmāyan*, but am confident, that an accurate comparison of the two poems would prove DIONYSOS and  
RA'MA

RA'MA to have been the same person; and I incline to think, that he was RA'MA, the son of CU'SH, who might have established the first regular government in this part of *Asia*. I had almost forgotten, that *Meros* is said by the *Greeks* to have been a mountain of *India*, on which their DIONYSOS was born, and that *Méru*, though it generally means the north pole in the *Indian* geography, is also a mountain near the city of *Naishada* or *Nysa*, called by the *Grecian* geographers *Dionysopolis*, and universally celebrated in the *Sanjerit* poems; though the birth-place of RA'MA is supposed to have been *Aybdhyà* or *Audh*. That ancient city extended, if we believe the *Erahmans*, over a line of ten *Yojans*, or about forty miles, and the present city of *Lac'bnau*, pronounced *Lucnow*, was only a lodge for one of its gates, called *Lacshmanadwora*, or the gate of LACSHMAN, a brother of RA'MA. M. SONNERAT supposes *Aybdhyà* to have been *Siam*; a most erroneous and unfounded supposition! which would have been of little consequence, if he had not grounded an argument on it, that RA'MA was the same person with BUDDHA, who must have appeared many centuries after the conquest of *Lancà*.

THE second great divinity, CRISHNA, passed a life, according to the *Indians*, of a most extraordinary

traordinary and incomprehensible nature. He was the son of DE'VACI' by VASUD'EVA; but his birth was concealed through fear of the tyrant CANSA, to whom it had been predicted, that a child born at that time in that family would destroy him: he was fostered, therefore, in *Mat'hurá* by an honest herdsman, surnamed ANANDA, or *Happy*, and his amiable wife YASO'DA', who, like another PALES, was constantly occupied in her pastures and her dairy. In their family were a multitude of young *Gópa's* or *cowherds*, and beautiful *Gópi's*, or *milkmaids*, who were his play-fellows during his infancy; and, in his early youth, he selected *nine* damsels as his favourites, with whom he passed his gay hours in dancing, sporting, and playing on his flute. For the remarkable number of his *Gópi's* I have no authority but a whimsical picture, where *nine* girls are grouped in the form of an elephant, on which he sits and pipes; and, unfortunately, the word *nava* signifies both *nine* and *new* or *young*; so that, in the following stanza, it may admit of two interpretations:

*taranjúpulíné navaballaví  
perisádú sahá cêlicutúhalát  
árutavilamvitacháruviharínám  
herimahám bridayina sadá vabé,*

“ I bear



“ I BEAR in my bosom continually that God,  
 “ who, for sportive recreation, with a train  
 “ of *nine* (young) dairy-maids, dances grace-  
 “ fully, now quick now slow, on the sands  
 “ just left by the Daughter of the Sun.”

BOTH he and the three RA'MAS are described as youths of perfect beauty; but the princesses of *Hindustán*, as well as the damsels of NANDA's farm, were passionately in love with CRISHNA, who continues to this hour the darling God of the *Indian* women. The sect of *Hindus*, who adore him with enthusiastic, and almost exclusive, devotion, have broached a doctrine, which they maintain with eagerness, and which seems general in these provinces, that he was distinct from all the *Avatárs*, who had only an *ansa*, or portion of his divinity; while CRISHNA was the *person* of VISHNU himself in a human form: hence they consider the third RA'MA, his elder brother, as the eighth *Avatár* invested with an *emanation* of his divine radiance; and, in the principal *Sanscrit* dictionary, compiled about two thousand years ago, CRISHNA, VA'SADE'VA, GO'VINDA, and other names of the Shepherd God, are intermixed with epithets of NA'RA'YAN, or the Divine Spirit. All the *Avatárs* are painted with gemmed *Ethiopian*, or *Parthian*, coronets; with rays encircling their heads; jewels in their ears; two necklaces, one straight and one pendent,

pendent, on their bosoms with dropping gems; garlands of well-disposed many-coloured flowers, or collars of pearls, hanging down below their waists; loose mantles of golden tissue or dyed silk, embroidered on their hems with flowers, elegantly thrown over one shoulder, and folded, like ribbands, across the breast; with bracelets too on one arm, and on each wrist: they are naked to the waists, and uniformly with *dark azure flesh*, in allusion, probably, to the tint of that primordial fluid, on which NĀ'RA'YAN moved in the beginning of time; but their skirts are bright yellow, the colour of the curious pericarpium in the centre of the water-lily, where *Nature*, as Dr. MURRAY observes, *in some degree discloses her secrets*, each seed containing, before it germinates, a few perfect leaves: they are sometimes drawn with that flower in one hand; a radiated elliptical ring, used as a missile weapon, in a second; the sacred shell, or left-handed buccinum, in a third; and a mace or battle-ax, in a fourth: but CRISHNA, when he appears, as he sometimes does appear, among the *Avatars*, is more splendidly decorated than any, and wears a rich garland of sylvan flowers, whence he is named VANAMA'LI, as low as his ankles, which are adorned with strings of pearls. Dark blue, approaching to *black*, which is the meaning of the word *Crishna*, is believed to have been his com-

complexion ; and hence the large bee of that colour is consecrated to him, and is often drawn fluttering over his head : that azure tint, which approaches to blackness, is peculiar, as we have already remarked, to VISHNU ; and hence, in the great reservoir or cistern at *Câtmandu* the capital of *Nepal*, there is placed in a recumbent posture a large well-proportioned image of *blue* marble, representing NA'RA'YAN floating on the waters. But let us return to the actions of CRISHNA ; who was not less heroic than lovely, and, when a boy, slew the terrible serpent *Caliya* with a number of giants and monsters : at a more advanced age, he put to death his cruel enemy CANSA ; and, having taken under his protection the king YUDHISHT'HIR and the other *Pândus*, who had been grievously oppressed by the *Curus*, and their tyrannical chief, he kindled the war described in the great Epic Poem, entitled the *Mahâbhârat*, at the prosperous conclusion of which he returned to his heavenly seat in *Vaïcont'ba*, having left the instructions comprized in the *Gîtâ* with his disconsolate friend ARJUN, whose grandson became sovereign of *India*.

IN this picture it is impossible not to discover, at the first glance, the features of APOLLO, surnamed *Namios*, or the *Pastoral*, in *Greece*, and OPITER, in *Italy* ; who fed the herds of ADMETUS, and slew the serpent *Python* ; a  
God,

God, amorous, beautiful, and warlike: the word *Góvinda* may be literally translated *Nomios*, as *Céfava* is *Crinitus*, or *with fine hair*; but whether *Gópála*, or the *herdsman*, has any relation to *Apollo*, let our Etymologists determine. Colonel VALLANCEY, whose learned enquiries into the ancient literature of *Ireland* are highly interesting, assures me, that *Crishna* in *Irisb* means the *SUN*; and we find *APOLLO* and *SOL* considered by the *Roman* poets as the same deity. I am inclined, indeed, to believe, that not only *CRISHNA* or *VISHNU*, but even *BRAHMA* and *SIVA*, when united, and expressed by the mystical word *O'M*, were designed by the first idolaters to represent the Solar fire; but *PHOEBUS*, or the *orb of the Sun* personified, is adored by the *Indians* as the God *SU'RYA*; whence the sect who pay him particular adoration, are called *Sauras*: their poets and painters describe his car as drawn by seven green horses, preceded by *ARUN*, or the *Dawn*, who acts as his charioteer, and followed by thousands of *Genii* worshipping him and modulating his praises. He has a multitude of names, and among them twelve epithets or titles, which denote his distinct powers in each of the twelve months: those powers are called *Adityas*, or sons of *ADITI* by *CASYAPA*, the *Indian URANUS*; and one of them has, according to some authorities, the name of

VISHNU



VISHNU, or *Pervader*. SU'RYA is believed to have descended frequently from his car in a human shape, and to have left a race on earth, who are equally renowned in the *Indian* stories with the *Heliadae* of *Greece*: it is very singular, that his two sons called ASWINAU or ASWINI'CUMA'RAU, in the dual, should be considered as twin-brothers, and painted like CASTOR and POLLUX; but they have each the character of *ÆSCULAPIUS* among the Gods, and are believed to have been born of a nymph, who, in the form of a mare, was impregnated with sun-beams. I suspect the whole fable of CASYAPA and his progeny to be astronomical; and cannot but imagine, that the *Greek* name CASSIOPEIA has a relation to it. Another great *Indian* family are called the *Children of the Moon*, or CHANDRA; who is a male Deity, and consequently not to be compared with ARTEMIS or DIANA; nor have I yet found a parallel in *India* for the Goddess of the *Chase*, who seems to have been the daughter of an *European* fancy, and very naturally created by the invention of *Bucolick* and *Georgick* poets: yet, since the *Moon* is a form of I'SWARA, the God of Nature, according to the verse of CA'LI-DA'SA, and since I'SA'NI has been shewn to be his consort or power, we may consider her, in one of her characters, as LUNA; especially as we shall soon

soon be convinced, that, in the shades below, she corresponds with the *HECATE* of *Europe*.

THE worship of *Solar*, or *Vestal*, *Fire* may be ascribed, like that of *Osiris* and *Isis*, to the second source of mythology, or an enthusiastic admiration of Nature's wonderful powers; and it seems, as far as I can yet understand the *Vedas*, to be the principal worship recommended in them. We have seen, that *MAHA'DE'VA* himself is personated by *Fire*; but, subordinate to him, is the God *AGNI*, often called *PA'VACA*, or the *Purifier*, who answers to the *VULCAN* of *Egypt*, where he was a Deity of high rank; and his wife *SWA'HA'* resembles the younger *VESTA*, or *VESTIA*, as the *Eolians* pronounced the *Greek* word for a *hearth*: *BHAVA'NI*, or *VENUS*, is the consort of the Supreme Destructive and Generative Power; but the *Greeks* and *Romans*, whose system is less regular than that of the *Indians*, married her to their *divine artist*, whom they also named *HEPHAISTOS* and *VULCAN*, and who seems to be the *Indian* *VISWACARMAN*, the *forging of arms* for the Gods, and inventor of the *agnyastra*, or *fiery shaft*, in the war between them and the *Daityas* or *Titans*. It is not easy here to refrain from observing (and, if the observation give offence in *England*, it is contrary to my intention) that the newly discovered planet should unquestionably be named

VULCAN.

VULCAN; since the confusion of analogy in the names of the planets is inelegant, unscholarly, and unphilosophical: the name URANUS is appropriated to the firmament; but VULCAN, the slowest of the Gods, and, according to the *Egyptian* priests, the oldest of them, agrees admirably with an orb which must perform its revolution in a very long period; and, by giving it this denomination, we shall have seven primary planets with the names of as many *Roman* Deities, MERCURY, VENUS, TELLUS, MARS, JUPITER, SATURN, VULCAN.

It has already been intimated, that the MUSES and NYMPHS are the GÓPYA of *Matb'urà*, and of *Goverdhan*, the *Parnassus* of the *Hindus*; and the lyric poems of JAYADEVA will fully justify this opinion; but the *Nymphs* of *Musick* are the thirty RA'GINI'S or *Female Passions*, whose various functions and properties are so richly delineated by the *Indian* painters, and so finely described by the poets: but I will not anticipate what will require a separate Essay, by enlarging here on the beautiful allegories of the *Hindus* in their system of musical modes, which they call RA'GA's, or *Passions*, and suppose to be Genii or Demigods. A very distinguished son of BRAHMA', named NA'RED, whose actions are the subject of a *Purāna*, bears a strong resemblance to HERMES or MERCURY; he was a wise legislator, great in arts

and in arms, an eloquent messenger of the Gods, either to one another or to favoured mortals, and a musician of exquisite skill; his invention of the *Vinâ*, or *Indian* lute, is thus described in the poem entitled *Mâgha*: “NA’RED  
 “sat watching from time to time his large  
 “*Vinâ*, which, by the impulse of the breeze,  
 “yielded notes that pierced successively the re-  
 “gions of his ear, and proceeded by musical in-  
 “tervals.” The law tract, supposed to have been revealed by NA’RED, is at this hour cited by the *Pandits*; and we cannot, therefore, believe him to have been the patron of *Thieves*; though an innocent theft of CRISHNA’S cattle, by way of putting his divinity to a proof, be strangely imputed, in the *Bhâgavat*, to his father BRAHMA’.

THE last of the *Greek* or *Italian* divinities, for whom we find a parallel in the Pantheon of *India*, is the *Stygian* or *Taurick* DIANA, otherwise named HECATE, and often confounded with PROSERPINE; and there can be no doubt of her identity with CA’LI’, or the wife of SIVA in his character of the *Stygian* JOVE. To this black Goddess, with a collar of golden skulls, as we see her exhibited in all her principal temples, *human sacrifices* were antiently offered, as the *Vêdas* enjoined; but, in the present age, they are absolutely prohibited, as are also the sacrifices of bulls and horses: kids are  
 still



still offered to her; and, to palliate the cruelty of the slaughter, which gave such offence to BUDDHA, the *Bráhmans* inculcate a belief, that the poor victims rise in the heaven of INDRA, where they become the musician of his band. Instead of the obsolete, and now illegal, sacrifices of a man, a bull, and a horse, called *Nerámédha*, *Gómédha*, and *As'wamédha*, the powers of nature are thought to be propitiated by the less bloody ceremonies at the end of autumn, when the festivals of CA'LI' and LACSHMI' are solemnized nearly at the same time: now, if it be asked how the Goddess of Death came to be united with the mild patroness of Abundance, I must propose another question, "How came PROSERPINE to be represented in the *European* system as the daughter of CERES?" Perhaps both questions may be answered by the proposition of natural philosophers, that "the apparent destruction of a substance is the production of it in a different form." The wild music of CA'LI's priests at one of her festivals, brought instantly to my recollection the *Scythian* measures of DIANA's adorers in the splendid opera of IPHIGENIA in *Tauris*, which GLUCK exhibited at *Paris* with less genius, indeed, than art, but with every advantage that an orchestra could supply.

THAT we may not dismiss this assemblage of *European* and *Asiatic* divinities with a sub-

ject so horrid as the altars of HECATE and CA'LI', let us conclude with two remarks, which properly, indeed, belong to the *Indian* Philosophy, with which we are not at present concerned.

FIRST, *Elysium* (not the place, but the bliss enjoyed there, in which sense MILTON uses the word) cannot but appear, as described by the poets, a very tedious and insipid kind of enjoyment: it is, however, more exalted than the temporary *Elysium* in the court of INDRA, where the pleasures, as in MUHAMMED'S paradise, are wholly sensual; but the *Muñi*, or *Elysian* happiness of the *Védanta* school, is far more sublime; for they represent it as a total absorption, though not such as to destroy consciousness, in the divine essence; but, for the reason before suggested, I say no more of this idea of beatitude, and forbear touching on the doctrine of transmigration, and the similarity of the *Védanta* to the *Sicilian*, *Italick*, and old *Academick* schools.

SECONDLY, In the mystical and elevated character of PAN, as a personification of the *Universe*, according to the notion of lord BACON, there arises a sort of similitude between him and CRISHNA considered as NA'RA'YAN. The *Grecian* God plays divinely on his reed, to express, we are told, ethereal harmony; he has his attendant Nymphs of the pastures and the dairy; his face is as radiant as the sky, and his head

head illumined with the horns of a crescent ; whilst his lower extremities are deformed and shaggy, as a symbol of the vegetables which the earth produces, and of the beasts who roam over the face of it. Now we may compare this portrait, partly with the general character of CRISHNA, the Shepherd God, and partly with the description in the *Bhagavat* of the divine spirit exhibited in the form of this *Universal World* ; to which we may add the following story from the same extraordinary poem. The Nymphs had complained to YASODA', that the child CRISHNA had been drinking their curds and milk ; on being reproved by his foster-mother for this indiscretion, he requested her to examine his mouth ; in which, to her just amazement, she beheld the *whole universe* in all its plenitude of magnificence.

WE must not be surpris'd at finding, on a close examination, that the characters of all the Pagan deities, male and female, melt into each other, and at last into one or two ; for it seems a well-founded opinion, that the whole croud of Gods and Goddeses in antient *Rome*, and modern *Varanes*, mean only the powers of nature, and principally those of the SUN, expressed in a variety of ways and by a multitude of fanciful names.

THUS have I attempted to trace, imperfectly at present for want of ampler materials, but

with a confidence continually increasing as I advanced, a parallel between the Gods adored in three very different nations, *Greece, Italy,* and *India*; but which was the original system, and which the copy, I will not presume to decide; nor are we likely, I believe, to be soon furnished with sufficient grounds for a decision: the fundamental rule, that *natural and most human operations proceed from the simple to the compound*, will afford no assistance on this point; since neither the *Asiatic* nor *European* system has any simplicity in it; and both are so complex, not to say absurd, however intermixed with the beautiful and the sublime, that the honour, such as it is, of the invention cannot be allotted to either with tolerable certainty.

SINCE *Egypt* appears to have been the grand source of knowledge for the *western*, and *India* for the more *eastern*, parts of the globe, it may seem a material question, whether the *Egyptians* communicated their Mythology and Philosophy to the *Hindus*, or conversely? But what the learned of *Memphis* wrote or said concerning *India* no mortal knows; and what the learned of *Varanes* have asserted, if any thing, concerning *Egypt*, can give us little satisfaction: such circumstantial evidence on this question as I have been able to collect, shall, nevertheless, be stated; because, unsatisfactory as it is, there may be something in it not wholly unworthy  
of



of notice; though after all, whatever colonies may have come from the *Nile* to the *Ganges*, we shall, perhaps, agree at last with Mr. BRYANT, that *Egyptians*, *Indians*, *Greeks* and *Italians*, proceeded originally from one central place, and that the same people carried their religion and sciences into *China* and *Japan*: may we not add even to *Mexico* and *Peru*?

EVERY one knows that the true name of *Egypt* is *Mis'r*, spelled with a palatial sibilant both in *Hebrew* and *Arabick*: it seems in *Hebrew* to have been the proper name of the first settler in it; and when the *Arabs* use the word for a great city, they probably mean a city like the capital of *Egypt*. Father MARCO, a Roman Missionary, who, though not a scholar of the first rate, is incapable, I am persuaded, of deliberate falsehood, lent me the last book of a *Rámáyan*, which he had translated through the *Hindi* into his native language, and with it a short vocabulary of Mythological and Historical names, which had been explained to him by the *Pandits* of *Betiya*, where he had long resided: one of the articles in his little dictionary was, “*Tirút*, a town and province in which the priests from *Egypt* settled;” and when I asked him what name *Egypt* bore among the *Hindus*, he said *Mis'r*, but observed, that they sometimes confounded it with *Abyssinia*. I perceived that his memory of what he had written

was correct; for *Mis'r* was another word in his Index, "from which country, he said, came "the *Egyptian* priests who settled in *Tirút*." I suspected immediately that his intelligence flowed from the *Muselmans*, who call sugar-candy *Misri* or *Egyptian*; but when I examined him closely, and earnestly desired him to recollect from whom he had received his information, he repeatedly and positively declared, that "it had been given him by several *Hindus*, "and particularly by a *Bráhma*n, his intimate "friend, who was reputed a considerable *Pan-* " *dit*, and had lived three years near his house." We then conceived that the seat of his *Egyptian* colony must have been *Tirúbit*, commonly pronounced *Tirút*, and antiently called *Mit'bilà*, the principal town of *Janacadesa*, or north *Babér*; but *MAHE'SA Pandit*, who was born in that very district, and who submitted patiently to a long examination concerning *Mis'r*, overset all our conclusions: he denied that the *Bráhmans* of his country were generally surnamed *Misra*, as we had been informed, and said, that the addition of *MISRA* to the name of *VA'CHESPETI*, and other learned authors, was a title formerly conferred on the writers of *miscellanies* or *compilers* of various tracts on religion or science, the word being derived from a root signifying *to mix*. Being asked, where

where the country of *Mis'r* was, "There are  
 "two, he answered, of that name; one of  
 "them *in the west*, under the dominion of  
 "Muselmáns, and another which all the *Sástras*  
 "and *Puránas* mention, in a mountainous re-  
 "gion to the *north* of *Ayédbyá*." It is evident,  
 that by the first he meant *Egypt*; but what he  
 meant by the second, it is not easy to ascertain.  
 A country, called *Tirubut* by our geographers,  
 appears in the maps between the north-eastern  
 frontier of *Audh* and the mountains of *Népal*;  
 but whether that was the *Tirút* mentioned to  
 father MARCO by his friend of *Betiya*, I cannot  
 decide. This only I know with certainty, that  
*Misra* is an epithet of two *Bráhmans* in the  
 drama of *SACONTALA*, which was written  
 near a century before the birth of CHRIST;  
 that some of the greatest lawyers, and two of  
 the finest dramatic poets, of *India* have the  
 same title; that we hear it frequently in court  
 added to the names of *Hindu* parties; and that  
 none of the *Pandits*, whom I have since con-  
 sulted, pretend to know the true meaning of  
 the word, as a proper name, or to give any  
 other explanation of it than that it is a *surname*  
 of *Bráhmans in the west*. On the account  
 given to Colonel KYN by the old *Rájá* of *Crisht-*  
*nanagar*, "concerning traditions among the  
 "Hindus, that some *Egyptians* had settled in  
 "this

systems than NEWTON, or of scholastic metaphysics than LOCKE? In whom could the *Romish* Church have had a more formidable opponent than in CHILLINGWORTH, whose deep knowledge of its tenets rendered him so competent to dispute them? In a word, who more exactly knew the abominable rites and shocking idolatry of *Canaan* than MOSES himself? Yet the learning of those great men only incited them to seek other sources of truth, piety, and virtue, than those in which they had long been immersed. There is no shadow then of a foundation for an opinion that MOSES borrowed the first nine or ten chapters of *Genesis* from the literature of *Egypt*: still less can the adamantine pillars of our *Christian* faith be moved by the result of any debates on the comparative antiquity of the *Hindus* and *Egyptians*, or of any inquiries into the *Indian* Theology. Very respectable natives have assured me, that one or two missionaries have been absurd enough, in their zeal for the conversion of the *Gentiles*, to urge, "that the *Hindus* were even now almost *Christians*, because their BRAHMA, VISHNU, and MAHE'SA, were no other than the *Christian* Trinity;" a sentence in which we can only doubt whether folly, ignorance, or impiety predominates. The three powers *Creative*, *Preservative*, and *Destructive*, which the *Hindus* express by the trilateral word OM, were



were grossly ascribed by the first idolaters to the *heat, light, and flame* of their mistaken divinity the Sun; and their wiser successors in the East, who perceived that the Sun was only a created thing, applied those powers to its creator; but the *Indian Triad*, and that of PLATO, which he calls the Supreme Good, the Reason, and the Soul, are infinitely removed from the holiness and sublimity of the doctrine which pious *Christians* have deduced from texts in the Gospel, though other *Christians*, as pious, openly profess their dissent from them. Each sect must be justified by its own faith and good intentions: this only I mean to inculcate, that the tenet of our Church cannot without profaneness be compared with that of the *Hindus*, which has only an apparent resemblance to it, but a very different meaning. One singular fact, however, must not be suffered to pass unnoticed. That the name of CRISHNA, and the general outline of his story, were long anterior to the birth of our Saviour, and probably to the time of HOMER, we know very certainly; yet the celebrated poem entitled *Bhāgavat*, which contains a prolix account of his life, is filled with narratives of a most extraordinary kind, but strangely variegated and intermixed with poetical decorations: the incarnate deity of the *Sanscrit* romance was cradled, as it informs us, among *Herdsmen*, but it adds,  
that

that he was educated among them, and passed his youth in playing with a party of milkmaids; a tyrant, at the time of his birth, ordered all new-born males to be slain; yet this wonderful babe was preserved by biting the breast instead of sucking the poisoned nipple of a nurse commissioned to kill him; he performed amazing, but ridiculous, miracles in his infancy, and, at the age of seven years, held up a mountain on the tip of his little finger; he saved multitudes partly by his arms and partly by his miraculous powers; he raised the dead by descending for that purpose to the lowest regions; he was the meekest and best-tempered of beings, washed the feet of the *Bráhmans*, and preached very nobly, indeed, and sublimely, but always in their favour; he was pure and chaste in reality, but exhibited an appearance of excessive libertinism, and had wives or mistresses too numerous to be counted; lastly, he was benevolent and tender, yet fomented and conducted a terrible war. This motley story must induce an opinion that the spurious Gospels, which abounded in the first age of *Christianity*, had been brought to *India*, and the wildest parts of them repeated to the *Hindus*, who ingrafted them on the old fable of *CÉSAVA*, the *APOLLO* of *Greece*.

As to the general extension of our pure faith in *Hindustan*, there are at present many sad obstacles

stacles to it. The *Muselmáns* are already a sort of heterodox *Christians*; they are *Christians*, if LOCKE reasons justly, because they firmly believe the immaculate conception, divine character, and miracles of the MESSIAH; but they are heterodox in denying vehemently his character of Son, and his equality, as God, with the Father, of whose unity and attributes they entertain and express the most awful ideas; while they consider our doctrine as perfect blasphemy, and insist that our copies of the Scriptures have been corrupted both by *Jews* and *Christians*. It will be inexpressibly difficult to undeceive them, and scarce possible to diminish their veneration for MOHAMMED and ALI, who were both very extraordinary men, and the second a man of unexceptionable morals: the *Korán* shines, indeed, with a borrowed light, since most of its beauties are taken from our Scriptures; but it has great beauties, and the *Muselmáns* will not be convinced that they were borrowed. The *Hindus*, on the other hand, would readily admit the truth of the Gospel; but they contend, that it is perfectly consistent with their *Sástras*: the Deity, they say, has appeared innumerable times, in many parts of this world and of all worlds, for the salvation of his creatures; and though we adore him in one appearance, and they in others, yet we  
adore,

adore, they say, the same God, to whom our several worships, though different in form, are equally acceptable, if they be sincere in substance. We may assure ourselves, that neither *Muselmans* nor *Hindus* will ever be converted by any mission from the Church of *Rome*, or from any other Church; and the only human mode, perhaps, of causing so great a revolution will be to translate into *Sanscrit* and *Persian* such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of *ISAIAH*, as are indisputably Evangelical, together with one of the Gospels, and a plain prefatory discourse containing full evidence of the very distant ages, in which the predictions themselves, and the history of the divine person predicted, were severally made public; and then quietly to disperse the work among the well-educated natives; with whom if in due time it failed of producing very salutary fruit by its natural influence, we could only lament more than ever the strength of prejudice and the weakness of unassisted reason.



## DISSERTATION II.

ON THE

## LITERATURE OF ASIA.

BEING THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE  
DELIVERED TO THE SOCIETY FEB. 1785.

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GENTLEMEN,

**I**F the Deity of the *Hindus*, by whom all their just requests are believed to be granted with singular indulgence, had proposed last year to gratify my warmest wishes, I could have desired nothing more ardently than the success of your institution; because I can desire nothing in preference to the general good, which your plan seems calculated to promote, by bringing to light many useful and interesting tracts, which, being too short for separate publication, might lie many years concealed, or, perhaps, irrecoverably perish: my wishes are accomplished, without an invocation to CA'MADHE'NU; and your Society, having already passed its infant state, is advancing to

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maturity

maturity with every mark of a healthy and robust constitution. When I reflect, indeed, on the variety of subjects, which have been discussed before you, concerning the history, laws, manners, arts, and antiquities of *Asia*, I am unable to decide whether my pleasure or my surprise be the greater; for I will not dissemble, that your progress has far exceeded my expectations: and though we must seriously deplore the loss of those excellent men, who have lately departed from this capital, yet there is a prospect still of large contributions to your stock of *Asiatick* learning, which, I am persuaded, will continually increase. My late journey to *Benares* has enabled me to assure you, that many of your members, who reside at a distance, employ a part of their leisure in preparing additions to your archives; and, unless I am too sanguine, you will soon receive light from them on several topicks entirely new in the republic of letters.

It was principally with a design to open sources of such information, that I long had meditated an expedition up the *Ganges* during the suspension of my business; but, although I had the satisfaction of visiting two ancient seats of *Hindu* superstition and literature, yet, illness having detained me a considerable time in the way, it was not in my power to continue  
in

in them long enough to pursue my inquiries ; and I left them, as *ÆNEAS* is feigned to have left the shades, when his guide made him recollect *the swift flight of irrevocable time*, with a curiosity raised to the height, and a regret not easy to be described.

WHOEVER travels in *Asia*, especially if he be conversant with the literature of the countries through which he passes, must naturally remark the superiority of *European* talents : the observation, indeed, is at least as old as *ALEXANDER* ; and though we cannot agree with the sage preceptor of that ambitious Prince, that “ the *Asiatics* are born to be slaves,” yet the *Athenian* poet seems perfectly in the right, when he represents *Europe* as a *sovereign Princess*, and *Asia* as *her Handmaid* : but if the mistress be transcendently majestick, it cannot be denied that the attendant has many beauties, and some advantages peculiar to herself. The ancients were accustomed to pronounce *panegyrics* on their own countrymen at the expence of all other nations, with a political view, perhaps, of stimulating them by praise, and exciting them to still greater exertions ; but such arts are here unnecessary ; nor would they, indeed, become a Society who seek nothing but truth unadorned by rhetorick ; and although we must be conscious of our superior advancement in all kinds of useful knowledge, yet we

ought not therefore to condemn the people of *Asia*, from whose researches into nature, works of art, and inventions of fancy, many valuable hints may be derived for our own improvement and advantage. If that, indeed, were not the principal object of your institution, little else could arise from it but the mere gratification of curiosity; and I should not receive so much delight from the humble share which you have allowed me to take in promoting it.

To form an exact parallel between the works and actions of the Western and Eastern worlds, would require a tract of no inconsiderable length; but we may decide on the whole, that reason and taste are the grand prerogatives of *European* minds, while the *Asiatics* have soared to loftier heights in the sphere of imagination. The civil history of their vast empires, and of *India* in particular, must be highly interesting to our common country; but we have a still nearer interest in knowing all former modes of ruling *these inestimable provinces*, on the prosperity of which so much of our national welfare, and individual benefit, seems to depend. A minute *geographical* knowledge, not only of *Bengal* and *Babar*, but, for evident reasons, of *all the kingdoms bordering on them*, is closely connected with an account of their many revolutions: but the *natural* productions of these territories, especially in the  
*vegetable*



*vegetable* and *mineral* systems, are momentous objects of research not only to an *imperial*, but, which is a character of equal dignity, a *commercial* people.

If *Botany* may be described by metaphors drawn from the science itself, we may justly pronounce a minute acquaintance with *plants*, their *classes*, *orders*, *kinds*, and *species*, to be its *flowers*, which can only produce *fruit* by an application of that knowledge to the purposes of life, particularly to *diet*, by which diseases may be avoided, and to *medicine*, by which they may be remedied: for the improvement of the last mentioned art, than which none surely can be more beneficial to mankind, the virtues of *minerals* also should be accurately known. So highly has medical skill been prized by the ancient *Indians*, that one of the *fourteen Retna's*, or *precious things*, which their Gods are believed to have produced by churning the ocean with the mountain *Mandara*, was a *learned physician*. What their old books contain on this subject we ought certainly to discover, and that without loss of time; lest the venerable but abstruse language in which they are composed, should cease to be perfectly intelligible, even to the best educated natives, through a want of powerful invitation to study it. BERNIER, who was himself of the Faculty, mentions approved medical books in *Sanscrit*, and

cites a few aphorisms, which appear judicious and rational ; but we can expect nothing so important from the works of *Hinda* or *Muselman* physicians, as the knowledge, which experience must have given them, of *simple* medicines. I have seen an *Indian* prescription of *fifty-four*, and another of *sixty-six*, ingredients ; but such compositions are always to be suspected, since the effect of one ingredient may destroy that of another ; and it were better to find certain accounts of a single leaf or berry, than to be acquainted with the most elaborate compounds, unless they too have been proved by a multitude of successful experiments. The noble deobstruent oil, extracted from the *Eranda* nut, the whole family of *Balsams*, the incomparable stomachick root from *Columbo*, the fine astringent ridiculously called *Japan* earth, but in truth produced by the decoction of an *Indian* plant, have long been used in *Asia* ; and who can foretel what glorious discoveries of other oils, roots, and salutary juices, may be made by your Society ? If it be doubtful whether the *Peruvian* bark be *always* efficacious in this country, its place may, perhaps, be supplied by some indigenous vegetable equally antiseptick, and more congenial to the climate. Whether any treatises on *Agriculture* have been written by experienced natives of these provinces,

vinces, I am not yet informed; but since the court of *Spain* expect to find useful remarks in an *Arabick* tract preserved in the *Escorial*, on the cultivation of land in that kingdom, we should inquire for similar compositions, and examine the contents of such as we can procure.

THE sublime science of Chymistry, which I was on the point of calling *divine*, must be added, as a key to the richest treasuries of nature; and it is impossible to foresee how greatly it may improve our *manufactures*, especially if it can fix those brilliant *dyes*, which want nothing of perfect beauty but a longer continuance of their splendour; or how far it may lead to new methods of *fluxing and compounding metals*, which the *Indians*, as well as the *Chinese*, are thought to have practised in higher perfection than ourselves.

IN those elegant arts which are called *fine and liberal*, though of less general utility than the labours of the mechanic, it is really wonderful how much a single nation has excelled the whole world: I mean the ancient *Greeks*, whose *Sculpture*, of which we have exquisite remains both on gems and in marble, no modern tool can equal; whose *Architecture* we can only imitate at a servile distance, but are unable to make one addition to it, without destroying its graceful simplicity; whose *Poetry* still delights us in youth, and amuses us at a

maturer age ; and of whose *Painting* and *Musick* we have the concurrent relations of so many grave authors, that it would be strange incredulity to doubt their excellence. *Painting*, as an art belonging to the powers of the imagination, or what is commonly called *Genius*, appears to be yet in its infancy among the people of the East : but the *Hindu* system of *musick* has, I believe, been formed on truer principles than our own ; and all the skill of the native composers is directed to the great object of their art, *the natural expression of strong passions*, to which *melody*, indeed, is often sacrificed ; though some of their tunes are pleasing even to an *European* ear. Nearly the same may be truly asserted of the *Arabian* or *Persian* system ; and, by a correct explanation of the best books on that subject, much of the old *Grecian* theory may probably be recovered.

THE *poetical* works of the *Arabs* and *Persians*, which differ surprisingly in their style and form, are here pretty generally known ; and though tastes, concerning which there can be no disputing, are divided in regard to their merit, yet we may safely say of them, what *ABULFAZL*, pronounces of the *Mahábhárat*, that, “ although they abound with extravagant  
“ images and descriptions, they are in the  
“ highest degree entertaining and instructive.”



“tive.” Poets of the greatest genius, PINDAR, ÆSCHYLUS, DANTE, PETRARCA, SHAKESPEARE, SPENSER, have most abounded in images not far from the brink of absurdity; but if their luxuriant fancies, or those of ABULOLA, FIRDAUSI, NIZA’MI, were pruned away at the hazard of their strength and majesty, we should lose many pleasures by the amputation. If we may form a just opinion of the *Sanscrit* poetry from the specimens already exhibited, (though we can only judge perfectly by consulting the originals), we cannot but thirst for the whole work of VYASA, with which a member of our Society, whose presence deters me from saying more of him, will in due time gratify the public. The poetry of *Matburâ*, which is the *Parnassian* land of the *Hindus*, has a softer and less elevated strain; but, since the inhabitants of the districts near *Agra*, and principally of the *Duab*, are said to surpass all other *Indians* in eloquence, and to have composed many agreeable tales and love-songs, which are still extant, the *Balsâ*, or vernacular idiom of *Vraja*, in which they are written, should not be neglected. No specimens of genuine *Oratory* can be expected from nations, among whom the form of government precludes even the idea of *popular eloquence*; but

but the art of writing, in elegant and modulated periods, has been cultivated in *Asia* from the earliest ages: the *Veda's*, as well as the *Alkoran*, are written in measured prose; and the compositions of ISOCRATES are not more highly polished than those of the best *Arabian* and *Persian* authors.

OF the *Hindu* and *Muselman* architecture there are yet many noble remains in *Babar*, and some in the vicinity of *Malda*; nor am I unwilling to believe, that even those ruins, of which you will, I trust, be presented with correct delineations, may furnish our own architects with new ideas of beauty and sublimity.

PERMIT me now to add a few words on the *Sciences*, properly so named; in which it must be admitted, that the *Asiatics*, if compared with our Western nations, are mere children. One of the most sagacious men in this age, who continues, I hope, to improve and adorn it, SAMUEL JOHNSON, remarked in my hearing, that "if NEWTON had flourished in ancient Greece, he would have been worshipped as a divinity;" how zealously then would he be adored in *Hindustan*, if his incomparable writings could be read and comprehended by the *Pandits* of *Cashmir* or *Benares*? I have seen a mathematical book in *Sanserit* of  
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the highest antiquity; but soon perceived from the diagrams, that it contained only simple elements: there may, indeed, have been, in the favourable atmosphere of *Asia*, some diligent observers of the celestial bodies, and such observations as are recorded, should indisputably be made publick; but let us not expect any new *methods*, or the analysis of new *curves*, from the geometricians of *Iran*, *Turkistan*, or *India*. Could the works of ARCHIMEDES, the NEWTON of *Sicily*, be restored to their genuine purity by the help of *Arabick* versions, we might then have reason to triumph on the success of our scientific inquiries; or could the successive improvements and various rules of *Algebra* be traced through *Arabian* channels, to which CARDAN boasted that he had access, the modern History of *Mathematicks* would receive considerable illustration.

THE Jurisprudence of the *Hindus* and *Muslimans* will produce more immediate advantage; and if some standard *law tracts* were accurately translated from the *Sanscrit* and *Arabick*, we might hope in time to see so complete a Digest of *Indian Laws*, that all disputes among the natives might be decided without *uncertainty*, which is in truth a disgrace, though satirically called a *glory*, to the forensic science.

ALL these objects of inquiry must appear to you, Gentlemen, in so strong a light, that bare intimations of them will be sufficient; nor is it necessary to make use of *emulation* as an incentive to an ardent pursuit of them: yet I cannot forbear expressing a wish, that the activity of the *French* in the same pursuits may not be superior to ours, and that the researches of M. SONNERAT, whom the court of *Ver-sailles* employed for seven years in these climates, merely to collect such materials as we are seeking, may kindle, instead of abating, our own curiosity and zeal. If you assent, as I flatter myself you do, to these opinions, you will also concur in promoting the object of them; and a few ideas having presented themselves to my mind, I presume to lay them before you, with an entire submission to your judgment.

No contributions, except those of the literary kind, will be requisite for the support of the Society; but if each of us were occasionally to contribute a succinct description of such manuscripts as he had perused or inspected, with their dates and the names of their owners, and to propose for solution such *questions* as had occurred to him concerning *Asiatick* Art, Science, and History, natural or civil, we should possess without labour, and almost by imperceptible degrees,



degrees, a fuller catalogue of Oriental books than has hitherto been exhibited, and our correspondents would be apprised of those points, to which we chiefly direct our investigations. Much may, I am confident, be expected from the communications of *learned natives*, whether lawyers, physicians, or private scholars, who would eagerly, on the first invitation, send us their *Mekâmât* and *Risâlahs* on a variety of subjects; some for the sake of advancing general knowledge, but most of them from a desire, neither uncommon nor unreasonable, of attracting notice, and recommending themselves to favour. With a view to avail ourselves of this disposition, and to bring their latent science under our inspection, it might be adviseable to print and circulate a short memorial, in *Persian* and *Hindi*, setting forth, in a style accommodated to their own habits and prejudices, the design of our institution; nor would it be impossible hereafter to give a medal annually, with inscriptions, in *Persian* on one side, and on the reverse in *Sanscrit*, as the prize of merit, to the writer of the best essay or dissertation. To instruct others is the prescribed duty of learned *Bráhmans*, and, if they be men of substance, without reward; but they would all be flattered with an honorary mark of distinction; and the *Mahomedans* have  
not

not only the permission, but the positive command, of their law-giver, *to search for learning even in the remotest parts of the globe.* It were superfluous to suggest, with how much correctness and facility their compositions might be translated for our use, since their languages are now more generally and perfectly understood than they have ever been by any nation of *Europe.*

DISSER-

## DISSERTATION III.

ON THE

## H I N D U ' S,

BEING THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE  
DELIVERED TO THE SOCIETY FEB. 2, 1786.

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OF all the works which have been published in our own age, or, perhaps, in any other, on the History of the Ancient World, and *the first population of this habitable globe*, that of Mr. JACOB BRYANT, whom I name with reverence and affection, has the best claim to the praise of deep erudition ingeniously applied, and new theories happily illustrated by an assemblage of numberless converging rays from a most extensive circumference: it falls, nevertheless, as every human work must fall, short of perfection; and the least satisfactory part of it seems to be that which relates to the derivation of words from *Asiatick* languages. Etymology has, no doubt, some use in historical researches; but it is a medium of proof so very fallacious,

fallacious, that, where it elucidates one fact, it obscures a thousand, and more frequently borders on the ridiculous than leads to any solid conclusion: it rarely carries with it any *internal* power of conviction from a resemblance of sounds or similarity of letters; yet often, where it is wholly unassisted by those advantages, it may be indisputably proved by *extrinsic* evidence. We know *à posteriori*, that both *fitz* and *bijo*, by the nature of two several dialects, are derived from *filius*; that *uncle* comes from *avus*, and *stranger* from *extra*; that *jour* is deducible, through the *Italian*, from *dies*; and *rossignol* from *luscinia*, or the *singer in groves*; that *sciuro*, *écureuil*, and *squirrel*, are compounded of two *Greek* words descriptive of the animal; which etymologies, though they could not have been demonstrated *à priori*, might serve to confirm, if any such confirmation were necessary, the proofs of a connection between the members of one great Empire; but, when we derive our *banger*, or *short-spendent sword*, from the *Persian*, because ignorant travellers thus mis-spell the word *khanjar*, which in truth means a different weapon, or *sandal-wood* from the *Greek*, because we suppose that *sandals* were sometimes made of it, we gain no ground in proving the affinity of nations, and only weaken arguments, which  
might



might otherwise be firmly supported. That Cu's then, or, as it certainly is written in one ancient dialect, Cu'r, and in others, probably, CA's, enters into the composition of many proper names, we may very reasonably believe; and that *Algeziras* takes its name from the *Arabick* word for an *island*, cannot be doubted: but when we are told from *Europe*, that places and provinces in *India* were clearly denominated from those words, we cannot but observe, in the first instance, that the town, in which we now are assembled, is properly written and pronounced *Calicatà*; that both *Catà* and *Cut* unquestionably mean *places of strength*, or, in general, any *inclosures*; and that *Gujarat* is at least as remote from *Jezirah* in sound as it is in situation.

ANOTHER exception (and a third could hardly be discovered by any candid criticism) to the *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, is, that the *method* of reasoning and arrangement of topics adopted in that learned work are not quite agreeable to the title, but almost wholly *synthetical*; and, though *synthesis* may be the better mode in pure *science*, where the principles are undeniable, yet it seems less calculated to give complete satisfaction in *historical* disquisitions, where every postulatium will perhaps be refused, and every definition contro-

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verted: this may seem a slight objection, but the subject is in itself so interesting, and the full conviction of all reasonable men so desirable, that it may not be lost labour to discuss the same or a similar theory in a method purely analytical; and, after beginning with facts of general notoriety or undisputed evidence, to investigate such truths as are at first unknown or very imperfectly discerned.

THE *five* principal nations, who have in different ages divided among themselves, as a kind of inheritance, the vast continent of *Asia*, with the many islands depending on it, are the *Indians*, the *Chinese*, the *Tartars*, the *Arabs*, and the *Persians*: *who* they severally were, *whence* and *when* they came, *where* they now are settled, and *what advantage* a more perfect knowledge of them all may bring to our *European* world, will be shewn, I trust, in *five* distinct essays; the last of which will demonstrate the connexion or diversity between them, and solve the great problem, whether they had *any* common origin, and whether that origin was *the same* which we generally ascribe to them.

I BEGIN with *India*, not because I find reason to believe it the true centre of population or of knowledge, but, because it is the country which we now inhabit, and from which we  
may

may best survey the regions around us; as, in popular language, we speak of the *rising sun*, and of his *progress through the Zodiac*, although it had long ago been imagined, and is now demonstrated, that he is himself the centre of our planetary system. Let me here premise, that, in all these inquiries concerning the history of *India*, I shall confine my researches downwards to the *Mohammedan* conquests at the beginning of the *eleventh* century, but extend them upwards, as high as possible, to the earliest authentic records of the human species.

INDIA then, on its most enlarged scale, in which the ancients appear to have understood it, comprises an area of near *forty* degrees on each side, including a space almost as large as all *Europe*; being divided on the west from *Persia* by the *Arachosian* mountains, limited on the east by the *Chinese* part of the farther peninsula, confined on the north by the wilds of *Tartary*, and extending to the south as far as the isles of *Java*. This trapezium, therefore, comprehends the stupendous hills of *Potyid* or *Tibet*, the beautiful valley of *Cashmir*, and all the domains of the old *Indoscythians*, the countries of *Népál* and *Bután*, *Cámrúp* or *Asam*, together with *Siam*, *Ava*, *Racan*, and the bordering kingdoms, as far as the *China* of

the *Hindus* or *Sin* of the *Arabian* Geographers ; not to mention the whole western peninsula with the celebrated island of *Sinhala*, or *Lion-like men*, at its southern extremity. By *India*, in short, I mean that whole extent of country in which the primitive religion and languages of the *Hindus* prevail at this day with more or less of their ancient purity, and in which the *Nāgarī* letters are still used with more or less deviation from their original form.

THE *Hindus* themselves believe their own country, to which they give the vain epithets of *Medhyama*, or *Central*, and *Punyabhūmi*, or the *Land of Virtues*, to have been the portion of *BHARAT*, one of *nine* brothers, whose father had the dominion of the whole earth ; and they represent the mountains of *Himālaya* as lying to the north, and, to the west, those of *Vindhya*, called also *Vindian* by the *Greeks* ; beyond which the *Sindhu* runs in several branches to the sea, and meets it nearly opposite to the point of *Dwārakā*, the celebrated seat of their Shepherd God : in the *south-east* they place the great river *Saravatya* ; by which they probably mean that of *Ava*, called also *Airāvati*, in part of its course, and giving perhaps its ancient name to the gulf of *Sabara*. This domain of *Bharat* they consider as the middle of the *Jambudwīpa*, which the *Tibetians* also call the Land of *Zambu* ; and the appellation



tion is extremely remarkable ; for *Jambu* is the *Sanscrit* name of a delicate fruit called *Jaman* by the *Muselmans*, and by us *rose-apple* ; but the largest and richest sort is named *Anrita*, or *Immortal* ; and the Mythologists of *Tibet* apply the same word to a celestial tree bearing *ambrosial fruit*, and adjoining to *four* vast rocks, from which as many sacred rivers derive their several streams.

THE inhabitants of this extensive tract are described by Mr. LORD with great exactness, and with a picturesque elegance peculiar to our ancient language : “ A people,” says he, “ presented themselves to mine eyes, clothed in  
“ linen garments somewhat low descending,  
“ of a gesture and garb, as I may say, maidenly, and well nigh effeminate, of a countenance shy and somewhat estranged, yet  
“ smiling out a glozed and bashful familiarity.” Mr. ORME, the Historian of *India*, who unites an exquisite taste for every fine art with an accurate knowledge of *Asiatick* manners, observes, in his elegant preliminary Dissertation, that this “ country has been inhabited from  
“ the earliest antiquity by a people, who have  
“ no resemblance, either in their figure or  
“ manners, with any of the nations contiguous to them ;” and that, “ although conquerors  
“ have established themselves at different times

“ in different parts of *India*, yet the original  
 “ inhabitants have lost very little of their ori-  
 “ ginal character.” The ancients, in fact, give  
 a description of them, which our early travel-  
 lers confirmed, and our own personal know-  
 ledge of them nearly verifies ; as you will per-  
 ceive from a passage in the Geographical Poem  
 of DIONYSIUS, which the Analyst of Ancient  
 Mythology has translated with great spirit :

“ To th’ east a lovely country wide extends,  
 “ INDIA, whose borders the wide ocean bounds ;  
 “ On this the sun, new rising from the main,  
 “ Smiles pleas’d, and sheds his early orient beams,  
 “ Th’ inhabitants are swart, and in their looks  
 “ Betray the tints of the dark hyacinth.  
 “ Various their functions ; some the rock explore,  
 “ And from the mine extract the latent gold ;  
 “ Some labour at the woof with cunning skill,  
 “ And manufacture linen ; others shape  
 “ And polish iv’ry with the nicest care ;  
 “ Many retire to rivers shoal, and plunge  
 “ To seek the beryl flaming in its bed,  
 “ Or glitt’ring diamond. Oft the jasper’s sound  
 “ Green, but diaphanous ; the topaz too,  
 “ Of ray serene and pleasing ; last of all,  
 “ The lovely amethyst, in which combine  
 “ All the mild shades of purple. The rich soil,  
 “ Wash’d by a thousand rivers, from all sides  
 “ Pours on the natives wealth without control.

THEIR sources of wealth are still abundant,  
 even after so many revolutions and conquests ;  
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in their manufactures of cotton they still surpass all the world; and their features have, most probably, remained unaltered since the time of DIONYSIUS; nor can we reasonably doubt, how degenerate and abased soever the *Hindus* may now appear, that in some early age they were splendid in arts and arms, happy in government, wise in legislation, and eminent in various knowledge: but, since their civil history beyond the middle of the *nineteenth* century from the present time is involved in a cloud of fables, we seem to possess only *four* general media of satisfying our curiosity concerning it; namely, first, their *Languages* and *Letters*; secondly, their *Philosophy* and *Religion*; thirdly, the actual remains of their old *Sculpture* and *Architecture*; and fourthly, the written memorials of their *Sciences* and *Arts*.

I. It is much to be lamented, that neither the *Greeks* who attended ALEXANDER into *India*, nor those who were long connected with it under the *Bactrian* Princes, have left us any means of knowing with accuracy, what vernacular languages they found on their arrival in this Empire. The *Mohammedans*, we know, heard the people of proper *Hindustan*, or *India* on a limited scale, speaking a *Bhāṣā*, or living tongue, of a very singular construction, the purest dialect of which was current in the

districts round *Agrà*, and chiefly on the poetical ground of *Mat'burà*; and this is commonly called the idiom of *Vraja*. Five words in six, perhaps, of this language were derived from the *Sanscrit*, in which books of religion and science were composed, and which appears to have been formed by an exquisite grammatical arrangement, as the name itself implies, from some unpolished idiom; but the basis of the *Hindustani*, particularly the inflexions and regimen of verbs, differed as widely from both those tongues, as *Arabick* differs from *Persian*, or *German* from *Greek*. Now the general effect of conquest is to leave the current language of the conquered people unchanged, or very little altered, in its ground-work, but to blend with it a considerable number of exotick names both for things and for actions; as it has happened in every country, that I can recollect, where the conquerors have not preserved their own tongue unmixed with that of the natives, like the *Turks* in *Greece*, and the *Saxons* in *Britain*; and this analogy might induce us to believe, that the pure *Hindî*, whether of *Tartarian* or *Chaldean* origin, was primeval in *Upper India*, into which the *Sanscrit* was introduced by conquerors from other kingdoms in some very remote age; for we cannot doubt that the language of the *Veda's* was used in the great extent of

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of country which has before been delineated, as long as the religion of *Brahmà* has prevailed in it.

THE *Sanſcrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful ſtructure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a ſtronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could poſſibly have been produced by accident; ſo ſtrong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have ſprung from ſome common ſource, which, perhaps, no longer exiſts: there is a ſimilar reaſon, though not quite ſo forcible, for ſuppoſing that both the *Gothick* and the *Celtick*, though blended with a very different idiom, had the ſame origin with the *Sanſcrit*; and the old *Persian* might be added to the ſame family, if this were the place for diſcuſſing any queſtion concerning the antiquities of *Persia*.

THE *characters*, in which the languages of *India* were originally written, are called *Nagari*, from *Nagar*, a City, with the word *Déva* ſometimes prefixed, becauſe they are believed to have been taught by the Divinity himſelf, who preſcribed the artificial order of them in a voice from heaven. Theſe letters, with no greater variation

tion in their form by the change of straight lines to curves, or conversely, than the *Cusick* alphabet has received in its way to *India*, are still adopted in more than twenty kingdoms and states, from the borders of *Cashgar* and *Khoten*, to *Râma's* bridge, and from the *Sindhu* to the river of *Siam*; nor can I help believing, although the polished and elegant *Dévanâgarî* may not be so ancient as the monumental characters in the caverns of *Jarâsandha*, that the square *Chaldaick* letters, in which most *Hebrew* books are copied, were originally the same, or derived from the same prototype, both with the *Indian* and *Arabian* characters: that the *Phenician*, from which the *Greek* and *Roman* alphabets were formed by various changes and inversions, had a similar origin, there can be little doubt; and the inscriptions at *Ganirab*, of which you now possess a most accurate copy, seem to be compounded of *Nâgarî* and *Ethiopick* letters, which bear a close relation to each other, both in the mode of writing from the left hand, and in the singular manner of connecting the vowels with the consonants. These remarks may favour an opinion entertained by many, that all the symbols of *sound*, which at first, probably, were only rude outlines of the different organs of speech, had a common origin: the symbols of *ideas* now used in *China* and *Japan*, and formerly

formerly, perhaps, in *Egypt* and *Mexico*, are quite of a distinct nature; but it is very remarkable, that the order of *sounds* in the *Chinese* grammars corresponds nearly with that observed in *Tibet*, and hardly differs from that which the *Hindus* consider as the invention of their Gods.

II. OF the *Indian* Religion and Philosophy, I shall here say but little; because a full account of each would require a separate volume: it will be sufficient in this Dissertation to assume, what might be proved beyond controversy, that we now live among the adorers of those very deities, who were worshipped under different names in old *Greece* and *Italy*, and among the professors of those philosophical tenets, which the *Ionick* and *Attick* writers illustrated with all the beauties of their melodious language. On one hand we see the trident of NEPTUNE, the eagle of JUPITER, the satyrs of BACCHUS, the bow of CUPID, and the chariot of the *Sun*; on another we hear the cymbals of RHEA, the songs of the *Muses*, and the pastoral tales of APOLLO NOMIUS. In more retired scenes, in groves, and in seminaries of learning, we may perceive the *Bráhmans* and the *Sarmanes*, mentioned by CLEMENS, disputing in the forms of *logick*, or discoursing on the vanity of human enjoyments, on the immortality of the soul,

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her emanation from the eternal mind, her debasement, wanderings, and final union with her source. The *six* philosophical schools, whose principles are explained in the *Derfana Sâstra*, comprise all the metaphysics of the old *Academy*, the *Stoa*, the *Lyceum*; nor is it possible to read the *Vêdânta*, or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing, that PYTHAGORAS and PLATO derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of *India*. The *Scythian* and *Hyperborean* doctrines and mythology may also be traced in every part of these eastern regions; nor can we doubt, that WOD or ODEN, whose religion, as the northern historians admit, was introduced into *Scandinavia* by a foreign race, was the same with BUDDHA, whose rites were probably imported into *India* nearly at the same time, though received much later by the *Chinese*, who soften his name into FO'.

THIS may be a proper place to ascertain an important point in the Chronology of the *Hindus*; for the priests of BUDDHA left in *Tibet* and *China* the precise epoch of his appearance, real or imagined, in this empire; and their information, which had been preserved in writing, was compared by the *Christian* Missionaries and scholars with our own era. COUPLET, DE GUIGNES, GIORGI, and BAILLY, differ a little in



in their accounts of this epoch, but that of *Couplet* seems the most correct: on taking, however, the medium of the four several dates, we may fix the time of BUDDHA, or the *ninth* great incarnation of VISHNU, in the year *one thousand and fourteen* before the birth of CHRIST, or *two thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine* years ago. Now the *Cashmirians*, who boast of his descent in their kingdom, assert that he appeared on earth about *two* centuries after CRISHNA, the *Indian APOLLO*, who took so decided a part in the war of the *Mahabharat*; and, if an Etymologist were to suppose that the *Athenians* had embellished their poetical history of PANDION's expulsion and the restoration of ÆGEUS with the *Asiatick* tale of the PA'NDUS and YUDHISHTH'IR, neither of which words they could have articulated, I should not hastily deride his conjecture: certain it is, that *Pandionandel* is called by the *Greeks* the country of PANDION. We have therefore determined another interesting epoch, by fixing the age of CRISHNA near the *three thousandth* year from the present time; and as the three first *Avatars*, or descents of VISHNU, relate no less clearly to an Universal Deluge, in which eight persons only were saved, than the *fourth* and *fifth* do to the *punishment of impiety* and the *humiliation of the proud*, we may for the present

sent assume, that the *second*, or *silver*, age of the *Hindus* was subsequent to the dispersion from *Babel*; so that we have only a dark interval of about a *thousand* years, which were employed in the settlement of nations, the foundation of states or empires, and the cultivation of civil society. The great incarnate Gods of this intermediate age are both named RA'MA, but with different epithets; one of whom bears a wonderful resemblance to the *Indian* BACCHUS, and his wars are the subject of several heroick poems. He is represented as a descendant from SU'RYA, or the SUN, as the husband of SI'TA', and the son of a princess named CAU'SELYA': it is very remarkable, that the *Peruvians*, whose *Incas* boasted of the same descent, styled their greatest festival *Ramafitoa*; whence we may suppose, that *South America* was peopled by the same race, who imported into the farthest parts of *Asia* the rites and fabulous history of RA'MA. These rites and this history are extremely curious; and although I cannot believe with NEWTON, that antient mythology was nothing but historical truth in a poetical dress, nor, with BACON, that it consisted solely of moral and metaphysical allegories, nor, with BRYANT, that all the heathen divinities are only different attributes and representations of the Sun or of deceased progenitors, but conceive that the whole system of religi-

religious fables rose, like the *Nile*, from several distinct sources, yet I cannot but agree, that one great spring and fountain of all idolatry in the four quarters of the globe, was the veneration paid by men to the vast body of fire which “looks from his sole dominion like the “God of this world;” and another, the immoderate respect shewn to the memory of powerful or virtuous ancestors, especially the founders of kingdoms, legislators, and warriors, of whom the *Sun* or the *Moon* were wildly supposed to be the parents.

III. THE remains of *architecture* and *sculpture* in *India*, which I mention here as mere monuments of antiquity, not as specimens of ancient art, seem to prove an early connection between this country and *Africa*: the pyramids of *Egypt*, the colossal statues described by PAUSANIAS and others, the sphinx, and the HERMES *Canis*, which last bears a great resemblance to the *Varāhāvatār*, or the incarnation of VISHNU in the form of a *Boar*, indicate the style and mythology of the same indefatigable workmen who formed the vast excavations of *Canārah*, the various temples and images of BUDDHA, and the idols which are continually dug up at *Gayā*, or in its vicinity. The letters on many of those monuments appear, as I have before intimated, partly of *Indian*, and partly

partly of *Abyssinian* or *Ethiopick*, origin; and all these indubitable facts may induce no ill-grounded opinion, that *Ethiopia* and *Hindustan* were peopled or colonized by the same extraordinary race; in confirmation of which it may be added, that the mountaineers of *Bengal* and *Babar* can hardly be distinguished in some of their features, particularly their lips and noses, from the modern *Abyssinians*, whom the *Arabs* call the children of CUSH: and the ancient *Hindus*, according to STRABO, differed in nothing from the *Africans* but in the straightness and smoothness of their hair, while that of the others was crisp or woolly; a difference proceeding chiefly, if not entirely, from the respective humidity or dryness of their atmospheres: hence the people who received the first light of the rising sun, according to the limited knowledge of the antients, are said by APULEIUS to be the *Arii* and *Ethiopians*, by which he clearly meant certain nations of *India*; where we frequently see figures of BUDDHA with curled hair, apparently designed for a representation of it in its natural state.

IV. It is unfortunate, that the *Silpi Sāstra*, or *Collection of Treatises on Arts and Manufactures*, which must have contained a treasure of useful information on *dyeing*, *painting*, and *metallurgy*, has been so long neglected, that



that few, if any, traces of it are to be found; but the labours of the *Indian* loom and needle have been universally celebrated; and *fine linen* is not improbably supposed to have been called *Sindon*; from the name of the river near which it was wrought in the highest perfection: the people of *Colchis* were also famed for this manufacture, and the *Egyptians* yet more, as we learn from several passages in scripture, and particularly from a beautiful chapter in *EZEKIEL*, containing the most authentic delineation of antient commerce, of which *Tyre* had been the principal mart. Silk was fabricated immemorially by the *Indians*, though commonly ascribed to the people of *Serica* or *Tancut*, among whom probably the word *Ser*, which the *Greeks* applied to the *silk-worm*, signified *gold*; a sense which it now bears in *Tibet*. That the *Hindus* were in early ages a *commercial* people, we have many reasons to believe; and in the first of their sacred law-tracts, which they suppose to have been revealed by *MENU* many millions of years ago, we find a curious passage on the legal *interest* of money, and the limited rate of it in different cases, with an exception in regard to *adventures at sea*; an exception which the sense of mankind approves, and which commerce absolutely requires, though it was not before the reign of *CHARLES I.* that our own

juris-

jurisprudence fully admitted it in respect of maritime contracts.

WE are told by the *Grecian* writers, that the *Indians* were the wisest of nations; and in moral wisdom they were certainly eminent: their *Nai Sastra*, or *System of Ethics*, is yet preserved, and the Fables of VISHNUSERMAN, whom we ridiculously call *Pilpay*, are the most beautiful, if not the most ancient, collection of apologues in the world: they were first translated from the *Sanscrit* in the *sixth* century, by the order of BUZERCHUMIHR, or *Bright as the Sun*, the chief physician, and afterwards *Vezir* of the great ANU'SHIREVA'N, and are extant under various names in more than twenty languages; but their original title is *Hitopadesa*, or *Amicable Instruction*; and as the very existence of Esop, whom the *Arabs* believe to have been an *Abyssinian*, appears rather doubtful, I am not disinclined to suppose, that the first *moral fables* which appeared in *Europe*, were of *Indian* or *Ethiopian* origin.

THE *Hindus* are said to have boasted of *three* inventions, all of which, indeed, are admirable, the method of instructing by *apologues*, the *decimal scale* adopted now by all civilized nations, and the game of *Chess*, on which they have some curious treatises; but if their numerous works on Grammar, Logick, Rhetorick,

rick, Musick, all which are extant and accessible, were explained in some language generally known, it would be found that they had yet higher pretensions to the praise of a fertile and inventive genius. Their lighter poems are lively and elegant; their Epick, magnificent and sublime in the highest degree; their *Puranas* comprise a series of mythological Histories in blank verse from the *Creation* to the supposed incarnation of *Buddha*; and their *Vedas*, as far as we can judge from that compendium of them which is called *Upanishat*, abound with noble speculations in metaphysics, and fine discourses on the being and attributes of God. Their most ancient medical book, entitled *Chereca*, is believed to be the work of *SIVA*; for each of the divinities in their *Triad* has at least one *sacred* composition ascribed to him; but, as to mere human works on *History* and *Geography*, though they are said to be extant in *Cashmir*, it has not been yet in my power to procure them. What their *astronomical* and *mathematical* writings contain, will not, I trust, remain long a secret: they are easily procured, and their importance cannot be doubted. The philosopher whose works are said to include a system of the universe founded on the principle of *Attraction* and the *Central* position of the sun, is named *YAVAN*

ACHA'RYA, because he had travelled, we are told, into *Ionian*: if this be true, he might have been one of those who conversed with PYTHAGORAS; this at least is undeniable, that a book on astronomy in *Sanscrit* bears the title of *Yavana Jatica*, which may signify the *Ionick Seet*; nor is it improbable, that the names of the planets and *Zodiacal* stars, which the *Arabs* borrowed from the *Greeks*, but which we find in the oldest *Indian* records, were originally devised by the same ingenious and enterprising race, from whom both *Greece* and *India* were peopled; the race, who, as DIONYSIUS describes them,

- 
- first assayed the deep,  
 † And wasted merchandize to coasts unknown,  
 † Those, who digested first the starry choir,  
 † Their motions mark'd, and call'd them by their names.\*

OF these cursory observations on the *Hindus*, which it would require volumes to expand and illustrate, this is the result: that they had an immemorial affinity with the old *Persians*, *Ethiopians*, and *Egyptians*, the *Phenicians*, *Greeks*, and *Tuscans*, the *Scythians* or *Goths*, and *Celts*, the *Chinese*, *Japanese* and *Peruvians*; whence, as no reason appears for believing that they were a colony from any one of those nations, or any of those nations from them, we may fairly conclude that they all proceeded  
 from



from some *central* country, to investigate which will be the object of my future Discourses; and I have a sanguine hope, that your collections during the present year will bring to light many useful discoveries; although the departure for *Europe* of a very ingenious member, who first opened the inestimable mine of *Sanfrit* literature, will often deprive us of accurate and solid information concerning the languages and antiquities of *India*.

## DISSERTATION IV.

ON THE

A R A B S.

BEING THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,  
 DELIVERED TO THE SOCIETY FEB. 15, 1787.

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GENTLEMEN,

I HAD the honour last year of opening to you my intention, to discourse at our annual meetings on the *five* principal nations who have peopled the continent and islands of *Asia*; so as to trace, by an historical and philological analysis, the number of ancient stems from which those five branches have severally sprung, and the central region from which they appear to have proceeded: you may, therefore, expect, that, having submitted to your consideration a few general remarks on the old inhabitants of *India*, I should now offer my sentiments on some other nation, who, from a similarity of *language, religion, arts and manners*, may be supposed to have had an early connection

connection with the *Hindus*; but, since we find some *Asiatick* nations totally dissimilar to them in all or most of those particulars, and since the difference will strike you more forcibly by an immediate and close comparison, I design at present to give a short account of a wonderful people, who seem in every respect so strongly contrasted to the original natives of this country, that they must have been for ages a distinct and separate race.

For the purpose of these Discourses, I considered *India* on its largest scale, describing it as lying between *Persia* and *China*, *Tartary* and *Java*; and for the same purpose, I now apply the name of *Arabia*, as the Arabian Geographers often apply it, to that extensive peninsula, which the Red Sea divides from *Africa*, the great *Assyrian* river from *Iran*, and of which the *Erythrean* Sea washes the base; without excluding any part of its western side, which would be completely maritime, if no isthmus intervened between the *Mediterranean* and the Sea of *Kolzem*: that country, in short, I call *Arabia*, in which the *Arabick* language and letters, or such as have a near affinity to them, have been immemorially current.

ARABIA, thus divided from *India* by a vast ocean, or at least by a broad bay, could hardly have been connected in any degree with this country,

country, until navigation and commerce had been considerably improved : yet, as the *Hindus* and the people of *Yemen* were both commercial nations in a very early age, they were probably the first instruments of conveying to the western world the gold, ivory, and perfumes of *India*, as well as the fragrant wood, called *alluwawa* in *Arabick* and *aguru* in *Sanscrit*, which grows in the greatest perfection in *Anam* or *Cochinchina*. It is possible too, that a part of the *Arabian* idolatry might have been derived from the same source with that of the *Hindus*; but such an intercourse may be considered as partial and accidental only ; nor am I more convinced, than I was fifteen years ago, when I took the liberty to animadvert on a passage in the History of Prince *Cantemir*, that the Turks have any just reason for holding the coast of *Yemen* to be a part of *India*, and calling its inhabitants *Yellow Indians*.

THE *Arabs* have never been entirely subdued ; nor has any impression been made on them, except on their borders ; where, indeed, the *Phenicians*, *Persians*, *Ethiopians*, *Egyptians*, and, in modern times, the *Othman Tartars*, have severally acquired settlements ; but, with these exceptions, the natives of *Hejaz* and *Yemen* have preserved for ages the sole dominion of their deserts and pastures, their mountains  
and



and fertile vallies: thus, apart from the rest of mankind, this extraordinary people have retained their primitive manners and language, features and character, as long and as remarkably as the *Hindus* themselves. All the genuine *Arabs* of *Syria*, whom I knew in *Europe*, those of *Yemen*, whom I saw in the island of *Hinzuan*, whither many had come from *Masfat* for the purpose of trade, and those of *Hejaz*, whom I have met in *Bengal*, form a striking contrast to the *Hindu* inhabitants of these provinces: their eyes are full of vivacity, their speech voluble and articulate, their deportment manly and dignified, their apprehension quick, their minds always present and attentive; with a spirit of independence appearing in the countenances even of the lowest among them. Men will always differ in their ideas of civilization, each measuring it by the habits and prejudices of his own country; but if courtesy and urbanity, a love of poetry and eloquence, and the practice of exalted virtues, be a juster measure of perfect society, we have certain proof, that the people of *Arabia*, both on plains and in cities, in republican and monarchical states, were eminently civilized for many ages before their conquest of *Persia*.

It is deplorable, that the ancient history of this majestick race should be as little known in detail

detail before the time of *Dbû Yezen*, as that of the *Hindus* before *Vicramāditya*; for, although the vast historical work of *Alnuwairî* and the *Murûjuldhabab*, or *Golden Meadows*, of *Almasûdî*, contain chapters on the kings of *Himyar*, *Ghasan*, and *Hirah*, with lists of them and sketches of their several reigns, and although genealogical tables, from which chronology might be better ascertained, are prefixed to many compositions of the old *Arabian* Poets, yet most manuscripts are so incorrect, and so many contradictions are found in the best of them, that we can scarce lean upon tradition with security, and must have recourse to the same media for investigating the history of the *Arabs*, that I before adopted in regard to that of the *Indians*; namely, their *language*, *letters*, and *religion*, their ancient *monuments*, and the certain remains of their *arts*; on each of which heads I shall touch very concisely, having premised, that my observations will in general be confined to the state of *Arabia* before that singular revolution at the beginning of the *seventh century*, the effects of which we feel at this day, from the *Pyrenean* mountains and the *Danube*, to the farthest parts of the *Indian Empire*, and even to the *Eastern Islands*.

I. For the knowledge which any *European*, who pleases, may attain of the *Arabian* language, we are principally indebted to the university

versity of *Leyden*; for, though several *Italians* have assiduously laboured in the same wide field, yet the fruit of their labours has been rendered almost useless by more commodious and more accurate works printed in *Holland*; and, though *Pocock* certainly accomplished much, and was able to accomplish any thing, yet the *Academical* ease which he enjoyed, and his theological pursuits, induced him to leave unfinished the valuable work of *Maidani*, which he had prepared for publication; nor, even if that rich mine of *Arabian* philology had seen the light, would it have borne any comparison with the fifty dissertations of *Hariri*, which the first *ALBERT SCHULTENS* translated and explained, though he sent abroad but few of them, and has left his worthy grandson, from whom, perhaps, *Maidani* also may be expected, the honour of publishing the rest: but the palm of glory in this branch of literature is due to *GOLIUS*, whose works are equally profound and elegant; so perspicuous in method, that they may always be consulted without fatigue, and read without languor, yet so abundant in matter, that any man, who shall begin with his noble edition of the *Grammar*, compiled by his master *ERPENIUS*, and proceed, with the help of his incomparable dictionary, to study his *History of Taimûr*, by *Ibni Arabshabb*, and shall make himself complete master of that sublime work, will under-stand

stand the learned *Arabick* better than the deepest scholar at *Constantinople* or at *Mecca*. The *Arabick* language, therefore, is almost wholly in our power; and as it is unquestionably one of the most antient in the world, so it yields to none ever spoken by mortals in the number of its words and the precision of its phrases; but it is equally true and wonderful, that it bears not the least resemblance, either in words or the structure of them, to the *Sanfrit*, or great parent of the *Indian* dialects; of which dissimilarity I will mention two remarkable instances: the *Sanfrit*, like the *Greek*, *Persian*, and *German*, delights in compounds, but in a much higher degree, and indeed to such excess, that I could produce words of more than twenty syllables, not formed ludicrously, like that by which the buffoon in *ARISTOPHANES* describes a feast, but with perfect seriousness, on the most solemn occasions, and in the most elegant works; while the *Arabick*, on the other hand, and all its sister dialects, abhor the composition of words, and invariably express very complex ideas by circumlocution; so that if a compound word be found in any genuine language of the *Arabian* Peninsula (*zammerdab* for instance, which occurs in the *Hamásab*), it may at once be pronounced an exotick. Again; it is the genius of the *Sanfrit*, and other languages of the same stock, that the roots of verbs be almost universally *biliteral*, so that



that *five and twenty hundred* such roots might be formed by the composition of the fifty *Indian* letters; but the *Arabick* roots are as universally *triliteral*, so that the composition of the *twenty-eight Arabian* letters would give near *two and twenty thousand* elements of the language: and this will demonstrate the surprising extent of it; for although great numbers of its roots are confessedly lost, and some, perhaps, were never in use, yet if we suppose ten thousand of them (without reckoning *quadriliterals*) to exist, and each of them to admit only *five* variations, one with another, in forming *derivative nouns*, even then a perfect *Arabick* dictionary ought to contain *fifty thousand* words, each of which may receive a multitude of changes by the rules of grammar. The derivatives in *Sanscrit* are considerably more numerous: but a farther comparison between the two languages is here unnecessary; since, in whatever light we view them, they seem totally distinct, and must have been invented by two different races of men; nor do I recollect a single word in common between them, except *Suruj*, the plural of *Siraj*, meaning both a *lamp* and the *sun*, the *Sanscrit* name of which is, in *Bengal*, pronounced *Sirja*; and even this resemblance may be purely accidental. We may easily believe with the *Hindus*, that *not even INDRA himself and his heavenly bands, much less any mortal, ever comprehended in his*  
mind

mind such an ocean of words as their sacred language contains; and with the *Arabs*, that no man uninspired was ever a complete master of *Arabick*: in fact, no person, I believe, now living in *Europe* or *Asia*, can read without study an hundred couplets together in any collection of ancient *Arabian* poems; and we are told, that the great author of the *Kimûs* learned by accident from the mouth of a child, in a village of *Arabia*, the meaning of three words, which he had long sought in vain from grammarians, and from books, of the highest reputation. It is by approximation alone, that a knowledge of these two venerable languages can be acquired; and, with moderate attention, enough of them both may be known, to delight and instruct us in an infinite degree. I conclude this head with remarking, that the nature of the *Ethiopick* dialect seems to prove an early establishment of the *Arabs* in part of *Ethiopia*, from which they were afterwards expelled, and attacked even in their own country by the *Abyssinians*, who had been invited over as auxiliaries against the tyrant of *Yemen*, about a century before the birth of *Muhammed*.

Of the characters in which the old compositions of *Arabia* were written, we know but little; except that the *Korân* originally appeared in those of *Cufah*, from which the modern *Arabian* letters, with all their elegant variations, were

were derived, and which unquestionably had a common origin with the *Hebrew* or *Chaldaick*; but as to the *Himyarick* letters, or those which we see mentioned by the name of *Almusaad*, we are still in total darkness; the traveller *Niebuhr* having been unfortunately prevented from visiting some ancient monuments in *Yemen*, which are said to have inscriptions on them: if those letters bear a strong resemblance to the *Nagari*, and if a story current in *India* be true, that some *Hindu* merchants heard the *Sanscrit* language spoken in *Arabia* the *Happy*, we might be confirmed in our opinion, that an intercourse formerly subsisted between the two nations of opposite coasts, but should have no reason to believe, that they sprang from the same immediate stock. The first syllable of *Humyar*, as many *Europeans* write it, might perhaps induce an Etymologist to derive the *Arabs* of *Yemen* from the great ancestor of the *Indians*; but we must observe, that *Hemyar* is the proper appellation of those *Arabs*; and many reasons concur to prove, that the word is purely *Arabick*: the similarity some proper names on the borders of *India* to those of *Arabia*, as the river *Arabiat*, a place called *Araba*, a people named *Aribes* or *Arabies*, and another called *Sabai*, is indeed remarkable, and may hereafter furnish me with observations of some importance, but not at all inconsistent with my present ideas.

II. It is generally asserted, that the old religion of the *Arabs* was entirely *Sabian*; but I can offer so little accurate information concerning the *Sabian* faith, or even the meaning of the word, that I dare not yet speak on the subject with confidence. This at least is certain, that the people of *Yemen* very soon fell into the common, but fatal error of adoring the Sun and the Firmament; for even the third in descent from YOCKTAN, who was consequently as old as NAHOR, took the surname of ABDUSHAMS, or *Servant of the Sun*; and his family, we are assured, paid particular honours to that luminary: other tribes worshipped the planets and fixed stars; but the religion of the poets at least seems to have been pure Theism; and this we know with certainty, because we have *Arabian* verses of unsuspected antiquity, which contain pious and elevated sentiments on the goodness and justice, the power and omnipresence, of ALLAH, or THE GOD. If an inscription, said to have been found on marble in *Yemen*, be authentick, the ancient inhabitants of that country preserved the religion of EBER, and professed a belief in *miracles and a future state*.

WE are also told, that a strong resemblance may be found between the religions of the pagan *Arabs* and the *Hindus*; but though this may be true, yet an agreement in worshipping the sun and stars will not prove an affinity between



tween the two nations: the *powers* of God represented as *female* deities, the adoration of *stones*, and the name of the Idol WUDD, may lead us indeed to suspect, that some of the *Hindu* superstitions had found their way into *Arabia*; and though we have no traces in *Arabian* History of such a conqueror or legislator as the great SESAC, who is said to have raised pillars in *Yemen* as well as at the mouth of the *Ganges*, yet since we know, that SA'CYA is a title of BUDDHA, whom I suppose to be WODEN, since BUDDHA was not a native of *India*, and since the age of SESAC perfectly agrees with that of SA'CYA, we may form a plausible conjecture that they were in fact the same person who travelled eastward from *Ethiopia*, either as a warrior or as a law-giver, about a thousand years before CHRIST, and whose rites we now see extended as far as the country of *Nifon*, or, as the *Chinese* call it, *Japuen*, both words signifying the *Rising Sun*. SA'CYA may be derived from a word meaning *power*, or from another denoting *vegetable food*; so that this epithet will not determine whether he was a hero or a philosopher; but the title BUDDHA, or *wise*, may induce us to believe that he was rather a benefactor than a destroyer of his species: if his religion, however, was really introduced into any part of *Arabia*, it could not

have been general in that country; and we may safely pronounce, that before the *Mohammedan* revolution, the noble and learned *Arabs* were *Theists*, but that a stupid idolatry prevailed among the lower orders of the people.

I FIND no trace among them, till their emigration, of any philosophy but *Ethicks*; and even their system of morals, generous and enlarged as it seems to have been in the minds of a few illustrious chieftains, was on the whole miserably depraved for a century at least before *Muhammed*: the distinguishing virtues which they boasted of inculcating and practising, were a contempt of riches, and even of death; but, in the age of the *Seven Poets*, their liberality had deviated into mad profusion, their courage into ferocity, and their patience into an obstinate spirit of encountering fruitless dangers: but I forbear to expatiate on the manners of the *Arabs* in that age, because the poems entitled *Almoállakât*, which have appeared in our own language, exhibit an exact picture of their virtues and their vices, their wisdom and their folly; and shew what may be constantly expected from men of open hearts and boiling passions, with no law to control, and little religion to restrain them.

III. Few monuments of antiquity are preserved in *Arabia*, and of those few the best accounts

counts are very uncertain ; but we are assured, that inscriptions on rocks and mountains are still seen in various parts of the Peninsula ; which, if they are in any known language, and if correct copies of them can be procured, may be decyphered by easy and infallible rules.

THE first ALBERT SCHULTENS has preserved in his *Antient Memorials of Arabia*, the most pleasing of all his works, two little poems in an elegiack strain, which are said to have been found, about the middle of the seventh century, on some fragments of ruined edifices in *Hadramût* near *Aden*, and are supposed to be of an indefinite, but very remote, age. It may naturally be asked, In what characters were they written ? Who decyphered them ? Why were not the original letters preserved in the book where the verses are cited ? What became of the marbles, which *Abdurrahman*, then governor of *Yemen*, most probably sent to the *Khalifah* at *Bagdad* ? If they be genuine, they prove the people of *Yemen* to have been  
“ herdsmen and warriors, inhabiting a fertile  
“ and well-watered country full of game, and  
“ near a fine sea abounding with fish, under a  
“ monarchical government, and dressed in  
“ green silk or vests of needlework,” either of their own manufacture, or imported from *India*. The measure of these verses is perfectly regular, and the dialect undistinguishable, at least by me,

from that of *Kuraisb*; so that if the *Arabian* writers were much addicted to literary impostures, I should strongly suspect them to be modern compositions on the instability of human greatness, and the consequences of irreligion, illustrated by the example of the *Himyarick* princes; and the same may be suspected of the first poem quoted by SCHULTENS, which he ascribes to an *Arab* in the age of SOLOMON.

THE supposed houses of the people called *Thamud* are also still to be seen in excavations of rocks; and, in the time of TABRIZI, the grammarian, a castle was extant in *Yemen*, which bore the name of ALADBAT, an old bard and warrior, who first, we are told, formed his army, thence called *alkbamis*, in five parts, by which arrangement he defeated the troops of *Himyar* in an expedition against *Sandâ*.

OF pillars erected by SESAC, after his invasion of *Yemen*, we find no mention in *Arabian* histories; and, perhaps, the story has no more foundation than another told by the *Greeks* and adopted by NEWTON, that the *Arabs* worshipped URANIA, and even BACCHUS by name, which, they say, means *great* in *Arabick*; but where they found such a word we cannot discover: it is true, that *Beccab* signifies a *great and tumultuous croud*, and, in this sense, is one name of the sacred city commonly called *Meccah*.

THE



THE *Cábab*, or *quadrangular* edifice at *Meccah*, is indisputably so antient, that its original use, and the name of its builder, are lost in a cloud of idle traditions. An *Arab* told me gravely, that it was raised by ABRAHAM, who, as I assured him, was never there: others ascribe it, with more probability, to ISMAEL, or one of his immediate descendants; but whether it was built as a place of divine worship, as a fortress, as a sepulchre, or as a monument of the treaty between the old possessors of *Arabia* and the sons of KEDAR, antiquaries may dispute, but no mortal can determine. It is thought by RELAND to have been the mansion of some antient Patriarch, and revered on that account by his posterity; but the room, in which we now are assembled, would contain the whole *Arabian* edifice; and if it were large enough for the dwelling-house of a Patriarchal family, it would seem ill adapted to the pastoral manners of the *Kedarites*: a *Persian* author insists, that the true name of *Meccah* is *Mabcadah*, or the *Temple of the Moon*; but, although we may smile at his etymology, we cannot but think it probable that the *Cábab* was originally designed for religious purposes. Three couplets are cited in an *Arabiick* History of this building, which, from their extreme simplicity, have less appearance of imposture than other verses of the  
same

same kind : they are ascribed to ASAD, a *Tobbá*, or king by *succession*, who is generally allowed to have reigned in *Yemen* an hundred and twenty-eight years before CHRIST's birth, and they commemorate, without any poetical imagery, the magnificence of the prince in *covering the holy temple with striped cloth and fine linen, and in making keys for its gate*. This temple, however, the sanctity of which was restored by MUHAMMED, had been strangely profaned at the time of his birth, when it was usual to decorate its walls with poems on all subjects, and often on the triumphs of *Arabian* gallantry and the praises of *Grecian* wine, which the merchants of *Syria* brought for sale into the deserts.

FROM the want of materials on the subject of *Arabian* antiquity, we find it very difficult to fix the Chronology of the *Ismaelites* with accuracy beyond the time of ADNAN, from whom the impostor was descended in the *twenty-first* degree : and although we have genealogies of ALKAMAH and other *Himyarick* bards as high as the *thirtieth* degree, or for a period of *nine hundred* years at least, yet we can hardly depend on them so far as to establish a complete chronological system : by reasoning downwards, however, we may ascertain some points of considerable importance. The uni-  
versal

verfal tradition of *Yemen* is, that YOKTAN, the fon of EBER, firft fettled his family in that country; which fettlement, by the computation admitted in *Europe*, muft have been above *three thoufand fix hundred* years ago, and nearly at the time when the *Hindus*, under the conduct of RAMA, were fubduing the firft inhabitants of thefe regions, and extending the *Indian* empire from *Ayodhya*, or *Audh*, as far as the ifle of *Sinhal* or *Silân*. According to this calculation, NUUMAN, king of *Yemen*, in the *ninth* generation from EBER, was contemporary with JOSEPH; and if a verfe compofed by that prince, and quoted by ABULFEDA, was really preferved, as it might eafily have been by oral tradition, it proves the great antiquity of the *Arabian* language and metre. This is a literal verſion of the couplet: ‘ When thou, who art in power, conducteft affairs with courteſy, thou attaineſt the high honours of thoſe who are moſt exalted, and whoſe mandates are obeyed.’ We are told, that from an elegant verb in this diſtich the royal poet acquired the ſurname of *Almudefer*, or the courteous. Now the reaſons for believing this verſe genuine, are its brevity, which made it eaſy to be remembered, and the good ſenſe comprized in it, which made it become proverbial; to which we may add, that the dialect is apparently old, and differs in three

words from the idiom of *Hejâz*. The reasons for doubting are, that sentences and verses of indefinite antiquity are sometimes ascribed by the *Arabs* to particular persons of eminence; and they even go so far as to cite a pathetick elegy of ADAM himself on the death of ABEL, but in very good *Arabick* and correct measure. Such are the doubts which necessarily must arise on such a subject, yet we have no need of ancient monuments or traditions to prove all that our analysis requires; namely, that the *Arabs*, both of *Hejâz* and *Yemen*, sprang from a stock entirely different from that of the *Hindus*, and that their first establishments in the respective countries where we now find them, were nearly coeval.

I CANNOT finish this article without observing, that when the king of *Denmark's* ministers instructed the *Danish* travellers to collect *historical* books in *Arabick*, but not to busy themselves with procuring *Arabian poems*, they certainly were ignorant that the only monuments of old *Arabian History* are collections of poetical pieces, and the commentaries on them; that all memorable transactions in *Arabia* were recorded in verse; and that more certain facts may be known by reading the *Hamâsab*, the *Dirwan of Hudbail*, and the valuable work of *Obaidullah*, than by turning over a hundred volumes



volumes in prose, unless indeed those poems are cited by the historians as their authorities.

IV. THE manners of the *Hejâzî Arabs*, which have continued we know from the time of SOLOMON to the present age, were by no means favourable to the cultivation of *arts*; and as to *sciences*, we have no reason to believe that they were acquainted with any; for the mere amusement of giving names to stars, which were useful to them in their pastoral or predatory rambles through the deserts, and in their observations on the weather, can hardly be considered as a material part of astronomy. The only arts in which they pretended to excellence (I except horsemanship and military accomplishments), were *poetry* and *rhetorick*: that we have none of their compositions in prose before the *Korân*, may be ascribed, perhaps, to the little skill which they seem to have had in writing; to their predilection in favour of poetical measure, and to the facility with which verses are committed to memory; but all their stories prove that they were eloquent in a high degree, and possessed wonderful powers of speaking without preparation in flowing and forcible periods. I have never been able to discover what was meant by their book called *Rawâsîm*, but suppose that they were collections of their common or customary law.

Writing

Writing was so little practised among them, that their old poems, which are now accessible to us, may almost be considered as originally unwritten; and I am inclined to think, that SAMUEL JOHNSON'S reasoning on the extreme imperfection of unwritten languages, was too general; since a language that is only spoken may nevertheless be highly polished by a people who, like the ancient *Arabs*, make the improvement of their idiom a national concern, appoint solemn assemblies for the purpose of displaying their poetical talents, and hold it a duty to exercise their children in getting by heart their most approved compositions.

THE people of *Yemen* had possibly more *mechanical arts*, and, perhaps, more *science*; but although their ports must have been the emporia of considerable commerce between *Egypt* and *India*, or part of *Persia*, yet we have no certain proofs of their proficiency in navigation or even in manufactures. That the *Arabs* of the Desert had musical instruments, and names for the different notes, and that they were greatly delighted with melody, we know from themselves; but their lutes and pipes were probably very simple, and their musick, I suspect, was little more than a natural and tuneful recitation of their elegiack verses and love-songs. The singular property of their language in shunning compound words, may be urged,

urged, according to BACON's idea, as a proof that they had made no progress in *arts*, 'which  
' require, says he, a variety of combinations to  
' express the complex notions arising from  
' them;' but the singularity may perhaps be imputed wholly to the genius of the language, and the taste of those who spoke it; since the old *Germans*, who knew no art, appear to have delighted in compound words, which poetry and oratory, one would conceive, might require as much as any meaner art whatsoever.

So great on the whole was the strength of parts or capacity, either natural or acquired from habit, for which the *Arabs* were ever distinguished, that we cannot be surprised when we see that blaze of genius which they displayed as far as their arms extended; when they burst, like their own dyke of *Arim*, through their ancient limits, and spread, like an inundation, over the great empire of *Iran*. That a race of *Taxls*, or *Courfers*, as the *Persians* call them, 'who drank the milk of camels and fed on lizards, should entertain a  
' thought of subduing the kingdom of FERIDUN,' was considered by the general of YEZDEGIRD's army as the strongest instance of fortune's levity and mutability; but *Firdausi* a complete master of *Assatick* manners, and singularly impartial, represents the *Arabs*, even  
in

in the age of FERIDUN, as ‘disclaiming any  
‘kind of dependance on that monarch, ex-  
‘ulting in their liberty, delighting in elo-  
‘quence, acts of liberality, and martial at-  
‘chievements; and thus making the whole  
‘earth, says the poet, red as wine with the  
‘blood of their foes, and the air like a forest of  
‘canes with their tall spears.’ With such a  
character they were likely to conquer any  
country that they could invade; and if ALEX-  
ANDER had invaded their dominions, they  
would, unquestionably, have made an obstinate,  
and probably a successful, resistance.

BUT I have detained you too long, Gentle-  
men, with a nation who have ever been my fa-  
vourites, and hope, at our next anniversary  
meeting, to travel with you over a part of *Asia*,  
which exhibits a race of men distinct both from  
the *Hindus* and from the *Arabs*. In the mean  
time it shall be my care to superintend the  
publication of your Transactions; in which, if  
the learned in *Europe* have not raised their ex-  
pectations too high, they will not, I believe,  
be disappointed: my own imperfect essays I  
always except; but, though my other en-  
gagements have prevented my attendance on  
your Society for the greatest part of last year,  
and I have set an example of that freedom  
from restraint, without which no Society can  
flourish,



flourish, yet as my few hours of leisure will now be devoted to *Sanfrit* literature, I cannot but hope, though my chief object be a knowledge of *Hindu* law, to make some discovery in other sciences, which I shall impart with humility, and which you will, I doubt not, receive with indulgence.

## DISSERTATION V.

ON THE

## TARTARS.

BEING THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE  
DELIVERED TO THE SOCIETY FEB. 21, 1788.

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AT the close of my last address to you, Gentlemen, I declared my design of introducing to your notice a people of *Asia*, who seemed as different in most respects from the *Hindus* and *Arabs*, as those two nations had been shewn to differ from each other; I mean the people whom we call *Tartars*: but I enter with extreme diffidence on my present subject, because I have little knowledge of the *Tartarian* dialects; and the gross errors of *European* writers on *Asiatick* literature have long convinced me, that no satisfactory account can be given of any nation, with whose language we are not perfectly acquainted. Such evidence, however, as I have procured by attentive reading

reading and scrupulous inquiries, I will now lay before you, interspersing such remarks as I could not but make on that evidence, and submitting the whole to your impartial decision.

CONFORMABLY to the method before adopted in describing *Arabia* and *India*, I consider *Tartary* also, for the purpose of this discourse, on its most extensive scale, and request your attention, whilst I trace the largest boundaries that are assignable to it. Conceive a line drawn from the mouth of the *Oby* to that of the *Dnieper*, and, bringing it back eastward cross the *Euxine*, so as to include the peninsula of *Krim*, extend it along the foot of *Caucasus*, by the rivers *Cur* and *Aras*, to the *Caspian* lake, from the opposite shore of which, follow the course of the *Jaihun* and the chain of *Caucasian* hills as far as those of *Imaus*; whence continue the line beyond the *Chinese* wall to the *White Mountain* and the country of *Yesso*; skirting the borders of *Persia*, *India*, *China*, *Corea*, but including part of *Russia*, with all the districts which lie between the *Glacial* sea and that of *Japan*. M. DE GUIGNES, whose great work on the *Huns* abounds more in solid learning than in rhetorical ornaments, presents us, however, with a magnificent image of this wide region; describing it as a stupendous edifice, the beams and pillars of which are many ranges

ranges of lofty hills, and the dome, one prodigious mountain, to which the *Chinese* give the epithet of *celestial*, with a considerable number of broad rivers flowing down its sides. If the mansion be so amazingly sublime, the land around it is proportionably extended, but more wonderfully diversified; for some parts of it are incruited with ice, others parched with inflamed air, and covered with a kind of lava; here we meet with immense tracts of sandy deserts and forest almost impenetrable; there, with gardens, groves, and meadows, perfumed with musks, watered by numberless rivulets, and abounding in fruits and flowers; and from east to west lie many considerable provinces, which appear as valleys in comparison of the hills towering above them, but in truth are the flat summits of the highest mountains in the world, or at least the highest in *Asia*. Near one fourth in latitude of this extraordinary region is in the same charming climate with *Greece*, *Italy*, and *Provence*; and another fourth in that of *England*, *Germany*, and the northern parts of *France*; but the *Hyperborean* countries can have few beauties to recommend them, at least in the present state of the earth's temperature: to the south, on the frontiers of *Iran* are the beautiful vales of *Soghd*, with the celebrated cities of *Samarkand* and *Bokhárà*; on those of *Tibet* are the territories  
of



of *Cashghar*, *Khoten*, *Chegil*, and *Khàtà*, all famed for perfumes, and for the beauty of their inhabitants; and on those of *China* lies the country of *Chin*, anciently a powerful kingdom; which name, like that of *Khàtà*, has in modern times been given to the whole *Chinese* empire, where such an appellation would be thought an insult. We must not omit the fine territory of *Tancùt*, which was known to the *Greeks* by the name of *Suica*, and considered by them as the farthest eastern extremity of the habitable globe.

SCYTHIA seems to be the general name which the ancient *Europeans* gave to as much as they knew of the country thus bounded and described; but, whether that word be derived, as *PLINY* seems to intimate, from *Sacai*, a people known by a similar name to the *Greeks* and *Persians*; or, as *BRYANT* imagines, from *Cuthia*; or, as Colonel *VALLANCEY* believes, from words denoting *navigation*; or, as it might have been supposed, from a *Greek* root implying *wrath* and *ferocity*; this at least is certain, that as *India*, *China*, *Persia*, *Japan*, are not appellations of those countries in the languages of the nations who inhabit them, so neither *Scythia* nor *Tartary* are names by which the inhabitants of the country now under our consideration have ever distinguished themselves. *Tataristan* is, indeed, a word used by the *Persians*

*sians* for the south-western part of *Scythia*, where the musk-deer is said to be common; and the name *Tátár* is by some considered as that of a particular *tribe*; by others, as that of a small river only; while *Túràn*, as opposed to *Iràn*, seems to mean the ancient dominion of *Afrásiab* to the north and east of the *Oxus*. There is nothing more idle than a debate concerning the names, which after all are of little consequence, when our ideas are distinct without them. Having given, therefore, a correct notion of the country which I propose to examine, I shall not scruple to call it by the general name of *Tartary*, though I am conscious of using a term equally improper in the pronunciation and the application of it.

TARTARY then, which contained, according to PLINY, an innumerable multitude of nations, by whom the rest of *Asia* and all *Europe* has in different ages been over-run, is denominated, as various images have presented themselves to various fancies, the great hive of the northern swarms, the nursery of irresistible legions, and, by a stronger metaphor, the foundery of the human race; but M. BAILLY, a wonderfully ingenious man, and a very lively writer, seems first to have considered it as the cradle of our species, and to have supported an opinion, that the whole ancient world was en-

lightened

lightened by sciences brought from the most northern parts of *Scythia*, particularly from the banks of the *Jenisea*, or from the *Hyperborean* regions: all the fables of old *Greece*, *Italy*, *Persia*, *India*, he derives from the north; and it must be owned, that he maintains his paradox with acuteness and learning. Great learning and great acuteness, together with the charms of a most engaging style, were indeed necessary to render even tolerable a system which places an earthly paradise, the gardens of *Hesperus*, the islands of the *Macares*, the groves of *Elysium* if not of *Eden*, the heaven of *INDIA*, the *Peristan*, or fairy-land, of the *Persian* poets, with its city of diamonds and its country of *Shûdcâm*, so named from *Pleasure* and *Love*, not in any climate which the common sense of mankind considers as the seat of delights, but beyond the mouth of the *Oby* in the Frozen Sea, in a region equalled only by that, where the wild imagination of *DANTE* led him to fix the worst of criminals in a state of punishment after death, and of which he could not, he says, even think without shivering. A very curious passage in a tract of *PLUTARCH* on the figure in the moon's orb, naturally induced *M. BAILLY* to place *Ogygia* in the north, and he concludes that island, as others have concluded rather fallaciously, to be

the Atlantis of PLATO, but is at a loss to determine, whether it was *Iceland* or *Greenland*, *Spitzberg* or *New Zembla*. Among so many charms, it was difficult, indeed, to give a preference; but our philosopher, though as much perplexed by an option of beauties as the shepherd of *Ida*, seems, on the whole, to think *Zembla* the most worthy of the golden fruit; because it is indisputably an island, and lies opposite to a gulph near the Continent, from which a great number of rivers descend into the ocean.

HE appears equally distressed among five nations, real and imaginary, to fix upon that which the *Greeks* named *Atlantes*; and his conclusion in both cases must remind us of the Showman at *Eton*, who, having pointed out in his box all the crowned heads of the world, and being asked by the school-boys, who looked through the glass, which was the Emperor, which the Pope, which the Sultan, and which the Great Mogul, answered eagerly, “Which you please, young gentlemen, which you please.” His letters, however, to VOLTAIRE, in which he unfolds his new system to his friend, whom he had not been able to convince, are by no means to be derided; and his general proposition, that arts and sciences had their source in *Tartary*, deserves a longer examination than can be given to it in this Discourse;



course: I shall, nevertheless, with your permission, shortly discuss the question under the several heads that will present themselves in order.

ALTHOUGH we may naturally suppose, that the numberless communities of *Tartars*, some of whom are established in great cities, and some encamped on plains in ambulatory mansions, which they remove from pasture to pasture, must be as different in their features as in their dialects, yet among those who have not emigrated into another country, and mixed with another nation, we may discern a family likeness, especially in their eyes and countenance, and in that configuration of lineaments which we generally call a *Tartar* face; but, without making anxious inquiries, whether all the inhabitants of the vast region before described have similar features, we may conclude, from those whom we have seen, and from the original portraits of TAI'MU'R and his descendants, that the *Tartars*, in general, differ wholly in complexion and countenance from the *Hindus* and from the *Arabs*; an observation, which tends in some degree to confirm the account given by modern *Tartars* themselves, of their descent from a common ancestor. Unhappily their lineage cannot be proved by authentick pedigrees or historical monuments; for all their writings extant, even those in the *Mogul* dialect,

lect, are long subsequent to the time of MUHAMMED; nor is it possible to distinguish their genuine traditions from those of the *Arabs*, whose religious opinions they have in general adopted. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, *Khwajah*, surnamed FAD'LU'LLAH, a native of *Kazvin*, compiled his account of the *Tartars* and *Mongals* from the papers of one PU'LA'D, whom the great-grandson of HOLAQU' had sent into *Tátáristán* for the sole purpose of collecting historical information; and the commission itself shews, how little the *Tartarian* Princes really knew of their own origin. From this work of RASHI'D, and from other materials, ABU'LGHA'ZI', King of *Khwárazm*, composed in the *Mogul* language his *Genealogical History*, which having been purchased from a merchant at *Bokhara* by some *Swedish* officers, prisoners of war in *Siberia*, has found its way into several *European* tongues: it contains much valuable matter, but, like all MUHAMMEDAN histories, exhibits tribes or nations as individual sovereigns; and if Baron DE TOTT had not strangely neglected to procure a copy of the *Tartarian* history, for the original of which he unnecessarily offered a large sum, we should probably have found, that it begins with an account of the Deluge, taken from the *Korán*, and proceeds to rank TURC, CHIN,

CHIN, TATA'R, and MONGAL, among the sons of YA'FET. The genuine traditional history of the *Tartars*, in all the books that I have inspected, seems to begin with OGHU'Z, as that of the *Hindus* does with RA'MA : they place their miraculous Hero and Patriarch four thousand years before CHENGIZ KHA'N, who was born in the year 1164, and with whose reign their historical period commences. It is rather surprising, that M. BAILLY, who makes frequent appeals to Etymological arguments, has not derived OGYGES from OGHU'Z, and ATLAS from Altai, or the Golden Mountain of *Tartary* : the *Greek* terminations might have been rejected from both words ; and a mere transposition of letters is no difficulty with an Etymologist.

My remarks in this address, Gentlemen, will be confined to the period preceding CHENGIZ ; and although the learned labours of M. DE GUIGNES, and the Fathers VISDELLOU, DEMAILLA, and GAUBIL, who have made an incomparable use of their *Chinese literature*, exhibit probable accounts of the *Tartars* from a very early age, yet the old historians of *China* were not only foreign, but generally hostile, to them ; and for both those reasons, either through ignorance or malignity, may be suspected of misrepresenting their transactions : if they speak truth, the ancient history

of the *Tartars* presents us, like most other histories, with a series of assassinations, plots, treasons, massacres, and all the natural fruits of selfish ambition. I should have no inclination to give you a sketch of such horrors, even if the occasion called for it; and will barely observe, that the first King of the *Hybunnis*, or *Huns*, began his reign, according to *VISDELLOU*, about three thousand five hundred and sixty years ago, not long after the time fixed in my former Discourses for the first regular establishment of the *Hindus* and *Arabs* in their several countries.

I. OUR first inquiry, concerning the languages and letters of the *Tartars*, presents us with a deplorable void, or with a prospect as barren and dreary as that of their deserts. The *Tartars*, in general, had no literature (in this point all authorities appear to concur); the *Tures* had no letters; the *Huns*, according to *PROCOPIUS*, had not even heard of them; the magnificent *CHENGIZ*, whose empire included an area of near eighty square degrees, could find none of his own *MONGALS*, as the best authors inform us, able to write his dispatches; and *TAI'MU'K*, a savage of strong natural parts, and passionately fond of hearing histories read to him, could himself neither write nor read. It is true, that *IBNU ARABSHA'H* mentions a set of characters, called *Dilberjyn*, which were used in  
*Kbatà*;



*Khâtâ*: " he had seen them," he says, " and  
 " found them to consist of forty-one letters,  
 " a distinct symbol being appropriated to each  
 " long and short vowel, and to each consonant  
 " hard or soft, or otherwise varied in pronun-  
 " ciation:" but *Khâtâ* was in southern *Tar-*  
*tary*, on the confines of *India*; and, from his  
 description of the characters there in use, we  
 cannot but suspect them to have been those of  
*Tibet*, which are manifestly *Indian*, bearing a  
 greater resemblance to those of *Bengal* than to  
*Devanâgarî*. The learned and eloquent *Arab*  
 adds, " that the *Tatars* of *Khâtâ* write  
 " in the *Dilberjîm* letters all their tales and his-  
 " tories; their journals, poems, and miscel-  
 " lanies; their diplomas, records of state and  
 " justice, the laws of *CHENGIZ*, their publick  
 " registers, and their compositions of every  
 " species." If this be true, the people of  
*Khâtâ* must have been a polished and even a  
 lettered nation; and it may be true, without  
 affecting the general position, that the *Tatars*  
 were illiterate; but *IBNU ARABSHAH* was a  
 professed rhetorician, and it is impossible to read  
 the original passage, without full conviction  
 that his object in writing it was to display his  
 power of words in a flowing and modulated  
 period. He says further, that in *Jagbatâe*, the  
 people of *Oghûr*, as he calls them, have a  
 system

system of *fourteen* letters only, denominated from themselves *Olghūrī*; and those are the characters which the *Mongals* are supposed, by some authors, to have borrowed. *Abūlg'hāsi* tells us only, that CHENGIZ employed the natives of *Elghūr* as excellent penmen, but the *Chinese* assert that he was forced to employ them, because he had no writers at all among his natural-born subjects; and we are assured by many, that KUBLAIKHA'N ordered letters to be invented for his nation by a *Tibetian*, whom he rewarded with the dignity of Chief *Lama*. The small number of *Elghūrī* letters might induce us to believe, that they were *Zend* or *Pahlavī*, which must have been current in that country, when it was governed by the sons of FERIDU'N; and if the alphabet ascribed to the *Eighurians* by M. DES HAUTESRAYES be correct, we may safely decide, that in many of its letters it resembles both the *Zend* and the *Syriack*, with a remarkable difference in the mode of connecting them; but, as we can scarce hope to see a genuine specimen of them, our doubt must remain in regard to their form and origin. The page exhibited by HYDE as *Khathyan* writing, is evidently a sort of broken *Cu'sick*; and the fine manuscript at *Oxford*, from which it was taken, is more probably a *Mendeau* work on some religious

ligious subject, than, as he imagined, a code of *Tartarian* laws. That very learned man appears to have made a worse mistake in giving us for *Mongal* characters a page of writing, which has the appearance of *Japanese* or mutilated *Chinese* letters.

If the *Tartars* in general, as we have every reason to believe, had no written memorials, it cannot be thought wonderful, that their languages, like those of *America*, should have been in perpetual fluctuation, and that more than fifty dialects, as HYDE had been credibly informed, should be spoken between *Moscow* and *China*, by the many kindred tribes, or their several branches, which are enumerated by ARU'LGHA'ZI'. What those dialects are, and whether they really sprang from a common stock, we shall probably learn from Mr. PALLAS, and other indefatigable men employed by the *Russian Court*; and it is from the *Russians* that we must expect the most accurate information concerning their *Asiatick* subjects. I persuade myself, that if their inquiries be judiciously made and faithfully reported, the result of them will prove, that all the languages properly *Tartarian* arose from one common source; excepting always the jargons of such wanderers or mountaineers, as, having long been divided from the main body of the nation, must

must in a course of ages have framed separate idioms for themselves. The only *Tartarian* language of which I have any knowledge is, the *Turkish* of *Constantinople*, which is, however, so copious, that whoever shall know it perfectly, will easily understand, as we are assured by intelligent authors, the dialects of *Tataristan*; and we may collect from ABU'LGHA'ZI', that he would find little difficulty in the *Calmac* and the *Mogul*. I will not offend your ears by a dry catalogue of similar words in those different languages; but a careful investigation has convinced me, that as the *Indian* and *Arabian* tongues are severally descended from a common parent, so those of *Tartary* might be traced to one ancient stem, essentially differing from the two others. It appears indeed, from a story told by ABU'LGHA'ZI', that the *Virats* and the *Mongals* could not understand each other; but no more can the *Danes* and the *English*, yet their dialects, beyond a doubt, are branches of the same *Gotbick tree*. The dialect of the *Moguls*, in which some histories of TAIMUR and his descendants were originally composed, is called in *India*, where a learned native set me right when I used another word, *Turci*; not that it is precisely the same with the *Turkish* of the *Othmanli*s, but the two idioms differ, perhaps,

less



less than *Swedish* and *German*, or *Spanish* and *Portuguese*, and certainly less than *Welsh* and *Irish*. In hope of ascertaining this point, I have long searched in vain for the original works ascribed to TAI'MU'R and BA'BER; but all the *Moguls* with whom I have conversed in this country, resemble the crow in one of their popular fables, who, having long affected to walk like a pheasant, was unable after all to acquire the gracefulness of that elegant bird, and in the mean time unlearned his own natural gait: they have not learned the dialect of *Persia*, but have wholly forgotten that of their ancestors.

A VERY considerable part of the old *Tartarian* language, which in *Asia* would probably have been lost, is happily preserved in *Europe*; and if the ground-work of the *Western Turkish*, when separated from the *Persian* and *Arabick*, with which it is embellished, be a branch of the lost *Oghuzian* tongue, I can assert with confidence, that it has not the least resemblance either to *Arabick* or *Sanscrit*, and must have been invented by a race of men wholly distinct from the *Arabs* or *Hindus*. This fact alone oversets the system of M. BAILLY, who considers the *Sanscrit*, of which he gives in several places a most erroneous account, as a fine monument of his primeval *Scythians*,  
the

the preceptors of mankind, and planters of a sublime philosophy even in *India*; for he holds it an incontestible truth, that a language which is dead, supposes a nation which is destroyed; and he seems to think such reasoning perfectly decisive of the question, without having recourse to astronomical arguments, or the spirit of ancient institutions; for my part, I desire no better proof than that which the language of the *DRAHMANS* affords, of an immemorial and total difference between the Savages of the mountains, as the old *Chinese* justly called the *Tartars*, and the studious, placid, contemplative inhabitants of these *Indian* plains.

II. THE geographical reasoning of M. BAILLY may, perhaps, be thought equally shallow, if not inconsistent in some degree with itself. "An adoration of the Sun and of the Fire," says he, "must necessarily have arisen in a cold region; therefore, it must have been foreign to *India, Persia, Arabia*; therefore it must have been derived from *Tartary*." No man, I believe, who has travelled in winter through *Babâr*, or has even passed a cold season at *Calcutta*, within the tropick, can doubt that the solar warmth is often desirable by all, and might have been considered as adorable by the ignorant, in these climates; or that the re-

turn

turn of spring deserves all the salutations which it receives from the *Persian* and *Indian* poets; not to rely on certain historical evidence, that ANTARAH, a celebrated warrior and bard, actually perished with cold on a mountain of *Arabia*. To meet, however, an objection, which might naturally be made to the voluntary settlement, and amazing population, of his primitive race in the icy regions of the north, he takes refuge in the hypothesis of M. BUFFON, who imagines that our whole globe was at first of a white heat, and has been gradually cooling from the poles to the equator; so that the *Hyperborean* countries had once a delightful temperature, and *Siberia* itself was even hotter than the climate of our temperate zones, that is, was in too hot a climate, by his first proposition, for the primary worship of the sun. That the temperature of countries has not sustained a change in the lapse of ages, I will by no means insist; but we can hardly reason conclusively from a variation of temperature to the cultivation and diffusion of science. If as many female elephants and tygresses as we now find in *Bengal* had formerly littered in the *Siberian* forests, and if their young, as the earth cooled, had sought a genial warmth in the climates of the south, it would not follow that other savages, who migrated in the  
same

same direction, and on the same account, brought religion and philosophy, language and writing, art and science, into the southern latitudes.

WE are told by ABU'LGHA'ZI', that the primitive religion of human creatures, or the pure adoration of One Creator, prevailed in *Tartary* during the first generations from YA'FET, but was extinct before the birth of OGHU'Z, who restored it in his dominions; that, some ages after him, the *Mongals* and the *Turcs* relapsed into gross idolatry; but that CHENGIZ was a Theist, and, in a conversation with the *Muhammedan* Doctors, admitted their arguments for the being and attributes of the Deity to be unanswerable, while he contested the evidence of their Prophet's legation. From old *Græcian* authorities we learn, that the *Mussagetæ* worshipped the Sun; and the narrative of an embassy from JUSTIN to the KHAKA'N, or Emperor, who then resided in a fine vale near the source of the *Irtish*, mentions the *Tartarian* ceremony of purifying the *Roman Ambassadors*, by conducting them between two fires. The *Tartars* of that age are represented as adorers of the four elements, and believers in an invisible spirit, to whom they sacrificed bulls and rams. Modern travellers relate, that, in the festivals of some *Tartarian* tribes, they pour a few drops  
of



of a consecrated liquor on the statues of their Gods; after which an attendant sprinkles a little of what remains three times towards the south in honour of fire, towards the west and east in honour of water and air, and as often towards the north in honour of the earth, which contained the reliques of their deceased ancestors: now all this may be very true, without proving a national affinity between the *Tartars* and *Hindus*; for the *Arabs* adored the planets and the powers of nature; the *Arabs* had carved images, and made libations on a black stone; the *Arabs* turned in prayer to different quarters of the heavens; yet we know with certainty, that the *Arabs* are a distinct race from the *Tartars*; and we might as well infer, that they were the same people, because they had each his *Nomades*, or wanderers for pasture; and because the *Turemans*, described by IBNU ARABSHA'H, and by him called *Tatars*, are like most *Arabian* tribes, pastoral and warlike, hospitable and generous, wintering and summering on different plains, and rich in herds and flocks, horses and camels; but this agreement in manners proceeds from the similar nature of their several deserts, and their similar choice of a free rambling life, without evincing a community of origin, which they could scarce have had without preserving some remnant at least of a common language.

M

MANY

MANY LAMAS, we are assured, or Priests of BUDDHA, have been found settled in *Siberia*; but it can hardly be doubted, that the *Lamas* had travelled thither from *Tibet*, whence it is more than probable, that the religion of the *Buddha's* was imported into Southern *Chinese Tartary*; since we know, that rolls of *Tibetian* writing have been brought even from the borders of the *Caspian*. The complexion of BUDDHA himself, which, according to the *Hindus*, was between white and ruddy, would perhaps have convinced M. BAILLY, had he known the *Indian* tradition, that the last great legislator and God of the East was a *Tartar*; but the *Chinese* consider him as a native of *India*; the *Bráhmins* insist, that he was born in a forest near *Gayá*; and many reasons may lead us to suspect, that his religion was carried from the west and the south to those eastern and northern countries, in which it prevails. On the whole, we meet with few or no traces in *Scythia* of *Indian* rites and superstitions, or of that poetical mythology with which the *Sanscrit* poems are decorated; and we may allow the *Tartars* to have adored the Sun with more reason than any southern people, without admitting them to have been the sole original inventors of that universal folly: we may even doubt the originality of their veneration for the four elements, which forms a principal part of the ritual

ritual introduced by ZERA'TUSHT, a native of *Rai* in *Persia*, born in the reign of GUSHTASF, whose son PASHU'TEN is believed by the *Persians* to have resided long in *Tartary*, at a place called *Cangidir*, where a magnificent palace is said to have been built by the father of CYRUS, and where the *Persian* prince, who was a zealot in the new faith, would naturally have disseminated its tenets among the neighbouring *Tartars*.

OF any philosophy, except natural ethicks, which the rudest society requires and experience reaches, we find no more vestiges in *Asiatick Tartary* and *Scythia*, than in ancient *Arabia*; nor would the name of a philosopher and a *Scythian* have been ever connected if *Anacharsis* had not visited *Athens* and *Lydia* for that instruction which his birth-place could not have afforded him. But ANACHARSIS was the son of a *Grecian* woman, who had taught him her language, and he soon learned to despise his own. He was unquestionably a man of a sound understanding and fine parts; and among the lively sayings which gained him the reputation of a wit even in *Greece*, it is related by DIOGENES LAERTIUS, that when an *Athenian* reproached him with being a *Scythian*, he answered, 'My country is indeed a disgrace to me, but thou art a disgrace to thy country.' What his country was in regard to manners and

civil duties, we may learn from his fate in it ; for when, on his return from *Athens*, he attempted to reform it by intruding the wise laws of his friend *SOLON*, he was killed in a hunting party with an arrow shot by his own brother, a *Scythian* chieftain. Such was the philosophy of *M. BAILLY's ATLANTES*, the first and most enlightened of nations ! We are assured, however, by the learned author of the *Dubiflan*, that the *Tartars* under *CHENGIZ* and his descendants were lovers of truth ; and would not even preserve their lives by a violation of it. *DE GUIGNES* ascribes the same veracity, the parent of all virtues, to the *Huns* ; and *STRABO*, who might only mean to lash the *Greeks* by praising *Barbarians* as *HORACE* extolled the wandering *Scythians*, merely to satirize his luxurious countrymen, informs us, that the nations of *Scythia* deserved the praise due to wisdom, heroick friendship, and justice ; and this praise we may readily allow them on his authority, without supposing them to have been the preceptors of mankind.

As to the laws of *ZAMOEXIS*, concerning whom we know as little as of the *Scythian DEUCALION*, or of *ABARIS* the *Hyperborean*, and to whose story even *HERODOTUS* gave no credit, I lament, for many reasons, that if ever they existed they have not been preserved : it is certain that a system of laws, called *Yásac*,  
has



has been celebrated in *Tartary* since the time of CHENGIZ, who is said to have republished them in his empire, as his institutions were afterwards adopted and enforced by TAIMU'R; but they seem to have been a common or traditional law, and were probably not reduced into writing till CHENGIZ had conquered a nation who were able to write.

III. HAD the religious opinions and allegorical fables of the *Hindus* been actually borrowed from *Scythia*, travellers must have discovered in that country some antient monuments of them, such as pieces of grotesque sculpture, images of the Gods and *Avatars*, and inscriptions on pillars or in caverns, analogous to those which remain in every part of the western peninsula, or to those which many of us have seen in *Babâr* and at *Banâras*; but (except a few detached idols) the only great monuments of *Tartarian* antiquity are a line of ramparts on the west and east of the *Caspian*, ascribed indeed by ignorant *Muselmans* to YA'JU'J and MAJIJ, or Gog and Magog, that is to the *Scythians*, but manifestly raised by a very different nation, in order to stop their predatory inroads through the passes of *Caucasus*. The *Chinese* wall was built or finished on a similar construction, and for a similar purpose, by an Emperor who died only two hundred and ten years before the beginning of our era; and the

other mounds were very probably constructed by the old *Pe-sians*, though, like many works of unknown origin, they are given to *SECANDER*; not the *Macedonian*, but a more ancient hero, supposed by some to have been *Jemshid*. It is related, that pyramids and tombs have been found in *Tataristan*, or Western *Scythia*, and some remnants of edifices in the lake *Saisan*; that vestiges of a deserted city have been recently discovered by the *Russians* near the *Caspian* sea, and the Mountain of Eagles; and that golden ornaments and utensils, figures of elks and other quadrupeds in metal, weapons of various kinds, and even implements for mining, but made of copper instead of iron, have been dug up in the country of the *Tshudes*; whence *M. BAILLY* infers, with great reason, the high antiquity of that people: but the high antiquity of the *Tartars*, and their establishment in that country near four thousand years ago, no man disputes; we are enquiring into their ancient religion and philosophy, which neither ornaments of gold, nor tools of copper, will prove to have had an affinity with the religious rites and the sciences of *India*. The golden utensils might possibly have been fabricated by the *Tartars* themselves; but it is possible too that they were carried from *Rome* or from *China*, whence occasional embassies were sent to

to the Kings of *Eighur*. Towards the end of the tenth century, the *Chinese* Emperor dispatched an ambassador to a prince named *ERSLA'N*, which, in the *Turkish* of *Constantinople*, signifies a lion, who resided near the Golden Mountain, in the same station, perhaps, where the *Romans* had been received in the middle of the sixth century. The *Chinese* on his return home reported the *Eighurs* to be a grave people, with fair complexions, diligent workmen, and ingenious artificers, not only in gold, silver, and iron, but in jasper and fine stones; and the *Romans* had before described their magnificent reception in a rich palace adorned with *Chinese* manufactures: but these times were comparatively modern; and even if we should admit that the *Eighurs*, who are said to have been governed for a period of two thousand years by an *I'dcut*, or sovereign of their own race, were, in some very early age, a literary and polished nation, it would prove nothing in favour of the *Huns*, *Turcs*, *Mongals*, and other savages to the north of *Pekin*, who seem in all ages, before *MUHAMMED*, to have been equally ferocious and illiterate.

WITHOUT actual inspection of the manuscripts that have been found near the *Caspian*, it would be impossible to give a correct opinion concerning them; but one of them, described

as written on blue silky paper in letters of gold and silver, not unlike *Hebrew*, was probably a *Tibetan* composition of the same kind with that which lay near the source of the *Brish*, and of which *Cossiano*, I believe, made the first accurate version. Another, if we may judge from the description of it, was probably modern *Turkish*; and none of them could have been of great antiquity.

IV. FROM ancient monuments, therefore, we have no proof that the *Tartars* were themselves well instructed, much less that they instructed the world; nor have we any stronger reason to conclude from their general manners and character, that they had made an early proficiency in arts and sciences: even of poetry, the most universal and most natural of the fine arts, we find no genuine specimens ascribed to them, except some horrible war-songs, expressed in *Persian* by *ALI OF YEZD*, and possibly invented by him. After the conquest of *Persia* by the *Mongals*, their princes, indeed, encouraged learning, and even made astronomical observations at *Samarkand*; and, as the *Turks*, became polished by mixing with the *Persians* and *Arabs*, though their very nature, as one of their own writers confesses, had before been like an incurable distemper, and their minds clouded with ignorance. Thus also the *Man-*  
*cheu*



*Chen* monarchs of *China* have been patrons of the learned and ingenious ; and the Emperor TIENLONG is, if he be now living, a fine *Chinese* poet. In all these instances the *Tartars* have resembled the *Romans* ; who, before they had subdued *Greece*, were little better than tigers in war, and *Fauns* or *Sylvans* in science and art.

BEFORE I left *Europe*, I had insisted, in conversation, that the *Tuzuc*, translated by Major DAVY, was never written by TAIMU'R himself, at least not as CÆSAR wrote his Commentaries, for one very plain reason, That no *Tartarian* king of his age could write at all ; and in support of my opinion I had cited IBNU ARABSHA'H, who, though justly hostile to the savage by whom his native city *Damascus* had been ruined, yet praises his talents and the real greatness of his mind, but adds, " He was wholly illiterate ; " he neither read nor wrote any thing ; and he " knew nothing of *Arabick*, though of *Persian*, " *Turkish*, and the *Mogul* dialect he knew as " much as was sufficient for his purpose, and " no more : he used with pleasure to hear his- " tories read to him, and so frequently heard " the same book, that he was able by memory " to correct an inaccurate reader." This passage had no effect on the translator, whom great and learned men in *India* had assured, it seems, that the work was authentic ; by which he means

means composed by the conqueror himself: but the great in this country might have been unlearned, or the learned might not have been great enough to answer any leading question in a manner that opposed the declared inclination of a *British* inquirer; and in either case, since no witnesses are named, so general a reference to them will hardly be thought conclusive evidence. On my part I will name a *Muselman*, whom we all know, and who has enough both of greatness and of learning to decide the question both impartially and satisfactorily: the *Now-woob* MOZUFFER JUNG informed me of his own accord, that no man of sense in *Hindustan* believed the work to have been composed by TAIMUR, but that his favourite, surnamed HINDU SHAH, was known to have written that book and others ascribed to his patron, after many confidential discourses with the *Emir*, and perhaps nearly in the Prince's words as well as in his person; a story which ALI OF YEZD, who attended the court of TAIMUR, and has given us a flowery panegyrick instead of a history, renders highly probable, by confirming the latter part of the *Arabian* account, and by total silence as to the literary productions of his master. It is true, that a very ingenious, but indigent, native, whom DAVY supported, has given me a written memorial on the subject, in which he mentions TAIMUR as the author

author of two works in *TURKISH*; but the credit of his information is overlet by a strange apocryphal story of a king of *Yemen* who invaded, he says, the *Emir's* dominions, and in whose library the manuscript was afterwards found, and translated by order of *Alisbir*, first minister of *TAIMUR's* grandson; and Major *DAVY* himself, before he departed from *Bengal*, told me, that he was greatly perplexed by finding in a very accurate and old copy of the *Tuzuc*, which he designed to republish with considerable additions, a particular account written, unquestionably, by *TAIMUR* of his own death. No evidence, therefore, has been adduced to shake my opinion, that the *Moguls* and *Tartars*, before their conquest of *India* and *Persia*, were wholly unlettered; although it may be possible that, even without art or science, they had, like the *Huns*, both warriors and law-givers in their own country some centuries before the birth of *CHRIST*.

If learning was ever anciently cultivated in the regions to the north of *India*, the seats of it, I have reason to suspect, must have been *Eigbur*, *Cashgar*, *Khata*, *Chin*, *Tancut*, and other countries of *Chinese Tartary*, which lie between the thirty-fifth and forty-fifth degrees of northern latitude; but I shall, in another Discourse, produce my reasons for supposing that

that those very countries were peopled by a race allied to the *Hindus*, or enlightened at least by their vicinity to *India* and *China*; yet in *Tancut*, which by some is annexed to *Tibet*, and even among its old inhabitants, the *Seres*, we have no certain accounts of uncommon talents or great improvements: they were famed, indeed, for the faithful discharge of moral duties, for a pacifick disposition, and for that longevity which is often the reward of patient virtues and a calm temper; but they are said to have been wholly indifferent, in former ages, to the elegant arts, and even to commerce; though FADLU'LLAH had been informed, that, near the close of the thirteenth century, many branches of natural philosophy were cultivated in *Cam-chew*, then the metropolis of *Serica*.

WE may readily believe those who assure us that some tribes of wandering *Tartars* had real skill in applying herbs and minerals to the purposes of medicine, and pretended to skill in magic; but the general character of their nation seems to have been this: they were professed hunters or fishers, dwelling on that account in forests or near great rivers, under huts or rude tents, or in waggons drawn by their cattle from station to station; they were dextrous archers, excellent horsemen, bold combatants,



tants, appearing often to flee in disorder for the sake of renewing their attack with advantage; drinking the milk of mares and eating the flesh of colts; and thus in many respects resembling the old *Arabs*, but in nothing more than in their love of intoxicating liquors, and in nothing less than in a taste for poetry and the improvement of their language.

Thus has it been proved, and, in my humble opinion, beyond controversy, that the far greater part of *Asia* has been peopled, and immemorially possessed, by three considerable nations, whom, for want of better names, we may call *Hindus*, *Arabs*, and *Tartars*; each of them divided and subdivided into an infinite number of branches, and all of them so different in form and features, language, manners, and religion, that if they sprang originally from a common root, they must have been separated for ages: whether more than three primitive stocks can be found, or, in other words, whether the *Chinese*, *Japanese*, and *Persians*, are entirely distinct from them, or formed by their intermixture, I shall hereafter, if your indulgence to me continue, diligently inquire. To what conclusions those inquiries will lead, I cannot yet clearly discern; but if they lead to truth, we shall not regret our journey through this dark region of ancient history, in which, while we proceed

ceed step by step, and follow every glimmering of certain light that presents itself, we must beware of those false rays and luminous vapours which mislead *Asiatick* travellers by an appearance of water, but are found, on a near approach, to be deserts of sand.

## DISSERTATION VI.

ON THE

## PERSIANS,

BEING THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE  
 DELIVERED TO THE SOCIETY FEB. 19, 1789.

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GENTLEMEN,

**I** TURN with delight from the vast mountains and barren deserts of *Turàn*, over which we travelled last year with no perfect knowledge of our course, and request you now to accompany me on a literary journey through one of the most celebrated and most beautiful countries in the world; a country, the history and languages of which, both ancient and modern, I have long attentively studied, and on which I may without arrogance promise you more positive information, than I could possibly procure on a nation so disunited and so unlettered as the *Tartars*: I mean that which *Europeans* improperly call *Persia*, the name of a single province being applied to the whole Empire of *Iràn*,

*Irân*, as it is correctly denominated by the present natives of it, and by all the learned *Muselmans* who reside in these *British* territories. To give you an idea of its largest boundaries, agreeably to my former mode of describing *India*, *Arabia*, and *Tartary*, between which it lies, let us begin with the source of the great *Assyrian* stream *Euphrates*, (as the *Greeks*, according to their custom, were pleased to miscall the *Forât*) and thence descend to its mouth in the Green Sea, or *Persian* Gulf, including in our line some considerable districts and towns on both sides of the river; then coasting *Persia* properly so named, and other *Iranian* provinces, we come to the Delta of the *Sindhu* or *Indus*; whence ascending to the mountains of *Cashghar*, we discover its fountains and those of the *Jaihun*, down which we are conducted to the *Caspian*, which formerly perhaps it entered, though it lose itself now in the sands and lakes of *Khwarezm*: we next are led from the sea of *Khazar*, by the banks of the *Cur*, or *Cyrus*, and along the *Caucasian* ridges, to the shore of the *Euxine*, and thence by the several *Grecian* seas, to the point, whence we took our departure, at no considerable distance from the *Mediterranean*. We cannot but include the *Lower Asia* within this outline, because it was unquestionably a part of the *Persian*, if not of the old *Assyrian* Empire;



Empire; for we know that it was under the dominion of CAIKHOUSRAU; and DIODORUS, we find, asserts, that the kingdom of *Troas* was dependent on *Affyria*, since PRIAM implored and obtained succours from his Emperor TEUTAMES; whose name approaches nearer to TAHMU'KAS, than to that of any other *Affyrian* Monarch. Thus may we look on *Iran* as the noblest island (for so the *Greeks* and the *Arabs* would have called it), or at least as the noblest peninsula, on this habitable globe; and if M. BAILLY had fixed on it as the Atlantis of PLATO, he might have supported his opinion with far stronger arguments than any that he has adduced in favour of *New Zembla*. If the account, indeed, of the Atlantes be not purely an *Egyptian* or an *Utopian* fable, I should be more inclined to place them in *Iran*, than in any region with which I am acquainted.

It may seem strange, that the ancient history of so distinguished an Empire should be yet so imperfectly known; but very satisfactory reasons may be assigned for our ignorance of it: the principal of them are, the superficial knowledge of the *Greeks* and *Jews*, and the loss of *Persian* archives or historical compositions. That the *Grecian* writers, before XENOPHON, had no acquaintance with *Persia*, and that all their accounts of it are wholly fabulous, is a paradox too extravagant to be seriously maintained; but

their connection with it in war or peace had, indeed, been generally confined to bordering kingdoms, under feudatory princes; and the first *Persian* Emperor whose life and character they seem to have known with tolerable accuracy, was the great CYRUS, whom I call, without fear of contradiction, CAIKHOSRAU; for I shall then only doubt that the KHOSRAU of FIRDASI' was the CYRUS of the first *Greek* historian, and the Hero of the oldest political and moral romance, when I doubt that LOUIS QUATORZE and LEWIS the *Fourteenth* were one and the same *French* King: it is utterly incredible, that two different Princes of *Persia* should each have been born in a foreign and hostile territory; should each have been doomed to death in his infancy by his maternal grandfather, in consequence of portentous dreams, real or invented; should each have been saved by the remorse of his destined murderer; and should each, after a similar education among herdsmen, as the son of a herdsman, have found means to revisit his paternal kingdom, and have delivered it, after a long and triumphant war, from the tyrant who had invaded it; should have restored it to the summit of power and magnificence. Whether so romantic a story, which is the subject of an Epic Poem as majestick and entire as the *Iliad*,  
be

be historically true; we may feel perhaps an inclination to doubt; but it cannot with reason be denied, that the outline of it related to a single Hero, whom the *Asiatics*, conversing with the Father of *European* history, described according to their popular traditions by his true name, which the *Greek* alphabet could not express: nor will a difference of names affect the question; since the *Greeks* had little regard for truth, which they sacrificed willingly to the graces of their language, and the nicety of their ears; and, if they could render foreign words melodious, they were never solicitous to make them exact. Hence they probably formed CAMBYSES from CA'MBAKHS, or *Granting Desires*, a title rather than a name; and XERXES from SHIR'U'YI, a Prince and Warrior in the *Shahnamah*, or from SHIRSHA'H, which might also have been a title; for the *Asiatic* Princes have constantly assumed new titles or epithets at different periods of their lives, or on different occasions; a custom, which we have seen prevalent in our own times both in *Iran* and *Hindustan*, and which has been a source of great confusion even in the scriptural accounts of *Babylonian* occurrences. Both *Greeks* and *Jews* have, in fact, accommodated *Persian* names to their own articulation; and both seem to have disregarded the native litera-

ture of *Irân*, without which they could at most attain a general and imperfect knowledge of the country. As to the *Persians* themselves, who were contemporary with the *Jews* and *Greeks*, they must have been acquainted with the history of their own times, and with the traditional accounts of past ages; but, for a reason which will presently appear, they chose to consider CAYU'MERS as the founder of their empire; and, in the numerous distractions which followed the overthrow of DA'RA', especially in the great revolution on the defeat of YEZDEGIRD, their civil histories were lost, as those of *India* have unhappily been, from the solicitude of the priests, the only depositaries of their learning, to preserve their books of law and religion at the expence of all others: hence it has happened, that nothing remains of genuine *Persian* history before the dynasty of SA'SA'S, except a few rustick traditions and fables, which furnished materials for the *Shâhnâmâh*, and which are still supposed to exist in the *Pahlavi* language. The annals of the *Pishdâdi* or *Assyrian* race must be considered as dark and fabulous; and those of the *Cayânî* family, or the *Medes* and *Persians*, as heroick and poetical; though the lunar eclipses, said to be mentioned by PROLEMY, fix the time of GUSHTASP, the Prince by whom ZERA'TUSHT was protected. Of the *Partbian* Kings descended from ARSHAC

or



OF ARSACES, we know little more than the names; but the *Sásanis* had so long an intercourse with the Emperors of *Rome* and *Byzantium*, that the period of their dominion may be called an historical age.

IN attempting to ascertain the beginning of the *Affyrian* Empire, we are deluded, as in a thousand instances, by names arbitrarily imposed. It had been settled by chronologers, that the first monarchy established in *Persia* was the *Affyrian*; and NEWTON, finding some of opinion, that it rose in the first century after the Flood, but unable by his own calculations to extend it farther back than seven hundred and ninety years before CHRIST, rejected part of the old system and adopted the rest of it; concluding, that the *Affyrian* Monarchs began to reign about two hundred years after SOLOMON, and that in all preceding ages, the government of *Iran* had been divided into several petty States and Principalities. Of this opinion I confess myself to have been; when, disregarding the wild chronology of the *Muselmans* and *Gabrs*, I had allowed the utmost natural duration to the reigns of eleven *Pishdadi* Kings, without being able to add more than a hundred years to NEWTON's computation. It seems, indeed, unaccountably strange, that, although ABRAHAM had found a regular monarchy in *Egypt*; although the kingdom

kingdom of *Yemen* had just pretensions to very high antiquity; although the *Chinese* in the *twelfth* century before our era had made approaches at least to the present form of their extensive dominions; and although we can hardly suppose the first *Indian* Monarchs to have reigned less than three thousand years ago; yet *Persia*, the most delightful, the most compact, the most desirable country of them all, should have remained for so many ages unsettled and disunited. A fortunate discovery, for which I was first indebted to MR. MUHAMMED HUSAIN, one of the most intelligent *Muselmans* in *India*, has at once dissipated the cloud, and cast a gleam of light on the primeval history of *Iran*, and of the human race, of which I had long despaired, and which could hardly have dawned from any other quarter.

THE rare and interesting tract on twelve different religions, entitled *The Dabistan*, and composed by a *Mohammedan* traveller, a native of *Cashmir*, named MOHSAN, but distinguished by the assumed surname of FA'NI', or *Perishable*, begins with a wonderfully curious chapter on the religion of HU'SHANG, which was long anterior to that of ZERA'TUSHT, but had continued to be secretly professed by many learned *Persians* even to the author's time; and several

of the most eminent of them, dissenting in many points from the *Gabrs*, and persecuted by the ruling powers of their country, had retired to *India*, where they compiled a number of books, now extremely scarce, which *MOHSAN* had perused, and with the writers of which, or with many of them, he had contracted an intimate friendship. From them he learned, that a powerful monarchy had been established for ages in *Iràn*, before the accession of *CAYUMERS*; that it was called the *Mabábá-dian* dynasty, for a reason which will soon be mentioned; and that many Princes, of whom seven or eight only are named in *The Dabistán*, and among them *MAHBUL*, or *MAHA' BELL*, had raised their Empire to the zenith of human glory. If we can rely on this evidence, which to me appears unexceptionable, the *Iránian* Monarchy must have been the oldest in the world; but it will remain dubious, to which of the three stocks, *Hindu*, *Arabian*, or *Tartar*, the first Kings of *Iràn* belonged; or whether they sprang from a fourth race distinct from any of the others: and these are questions which we shall be able, I imagine, to answer precisely, when we have carefully inquired into the languages and letters, religion and philosophy, and incidentally into the arts and sciences, of the ancient *Persians*.

I. In the new and important remarks which I am going to offer on the ancient languages and characters of *Irân*, I am sensible, that you must give me credit for many assertions, which on this occasion it is impossible to prove; for I should ill deserve your indulgent attention, if I were to abuse it by repeating a dry list of detached words, and presenting you with a vocabulary instead of a dissertation; but, since I have no system to maintain, and have not suffered imagination to delude my judgement; since I have habituated myself to form opinions of men and things from evidence, which is the only solid basis of civil, as experiment is of natural, knowledge; and since I have maturely considered the questions which I mean to discuss; you will not, I am persuaded, suspect my testimony, or think that I go too far, when I assure you, that I will assert nothing positively, which I am not able satisfactorily to demonstrate. When MUHAMMED was born, and ANU'SHIRAVA'N, whom he calls the *Just King*, sat on the throne of *Persia*, two languages appear to have been generally prevalent in the great Empire of *Irân*: that of the Court, thence named *Deri*, which was only a refined and elegant dialect of the *Pâri*, so called from the province of which *Sbirâz* is now the capital; and that of the Learned, in which most

books



books were composed, and which had the name of *Pahlavî*, either from the *Heroes* who spoke it in former times, or from *Pablu*, a tract of land, which included, we are told, some considerable cities of *Irâk*. The ruder dialects of both were, and I believe still are, spoken by the rusticks in several provinces; and in many of them, as *Herât*, *Zâbul*, *Sîstân*, and others, distinct idioms were vernacular, as it happens in every kingdom of great extent. Besides the *Pârsî* and *Pahlavî*, a very ancient and abstruse tongue was known to the Priests and Philosophers, called the *language of the Zend*, because a book on religious and moral duties, which they held sacred, and which bore that name, had been written in it; while the *Pâzend*, or Comment on that work, was composed in *Pahlavî*, as a more popular idiom; but a learned follower of ZERA'TUSHT, named BAHMAN, who lately died at *Calcutta*, where he had lived with me as a *Persian* reader about three years, assured me, that the letters of his Prophet's book were properly called *Zend*, and the *language*, *Avestâ*, as the words of the *Veda's* are *Sanserit*, and the characters, *Nûgarî*; or as the old *Saga's* and poems of *Iseland* were expressed in *Runick* letters. Let us however, in compliance with custom, give the name of *Zend* to the sacred language of *Persia*, until we  
can

can find, as we shall very soon, a fitter appellation for it. The *Zend* and the old *Pahlavi* are almost extinct in *Irân*; for among six or seven thousand *Gabrs* who reside chiefly at *Yezd*, and in *Cirmân* there are very few who can read *Pahlavi*, and scarce any who even boast of knowing the *Zend*; while the *Pârsî*, which remains almost pure in the *Shâhnâmâh*, has now become, by the intermixture of numberless *Arabick* words, and many imperceptible changes, a new language, exquisitely polished by a series of fine writers in prose and verse, and analogous to the different idioms gradually formed in *Europe* after the subversion of the *Roman Empire*: but with modern *Persians* we have no concern in our present enquiry, which I confine to the ages that preceded *The Moham-medan conquest*.

HAVING twice read the works of *FIRDAUSI* with great attention, since I applied myself to the study of old *Indian* literature, I can assure you, with confidence, that hundreds of *Pârsî* nouns are pure *Sanserit*, with no other change than such as may be observed in the numerous *Chishti*'s, or vernacular dialects, of *India*; that very many imperatives are the roots of *Sanserit* verbs; and that even the moods and tenses of the *Persian* verb substantive, which is the model of all the rest, are deducible from the *Sanserit* by an easy and clear

clear analogy. We may hence conclude, that the *Parsi* was derived, like the various *Indian* dialects, from the language of the *Bráhmans*; and I must add, that in the pure *Persian* I find no trace of any *Arabian* tongue, except what proceeded from the known intercourse between the *Persians* and *Arabs*, especially in the time of *BAHRA'M*, who was educated in *Arabia*, and whose *Arabick* verses are still extant, together with his heroic line in *Deri*, which many suppose to be the first attempt at *Persian* versification in *Arabian* metre. But, without having recourse to other arguments, the composition of words, in which the genius of the *Persian* delights, and which that of the *Arabick* abhors, is a decisive proof, that the *Parsi* sprang from an *Indian*, and not from an *Arabian* stock. Considering languages as mere instruments of knowledge, and having strong reason to doubt the existence of genuine books in *The Zend* or *Pahlavi* (especially since the well-informed author of *The Dabistan* affirms the work of *ZERA'TUSHT* to have been lost, and its place supplied by a recent compilation), I had no inducement, though I had an opportunity, to learn what remains of those ancient languages; but I often conversed on them with my friend *BAHMAN*, and both of us were convinced, after full consideration, that the *Zend* bore a strong resemblance to *Sanscrit*, and the *Pahlavi* to *Arabick*. He had at my

my request translated into *Pahlavi* the fine inscription, exhibited in the *Gulistân*, on the diadem of CYRUS; and I had the patience to read the list of words from the *Pâzend*, in the Appendix to the *Farhangi Jebāngiri*. This examination gave me perfect conviction, that the *Pahlavi* was a dialect of the *Chaldaick*; and of this curious fact I will exhibit a short proof.

By the nature of the *Chaldean* tongue most words ended in the first long vowel like *škemîâ*, Heaven; and that very word, unaltered in a single letter, we find in the *Pâzend*, together with *laiîâ*, night; *meyâ*, water; *nirâ*, fire; *matrâ*, rain, and a multitude of others, all *Arabick* or *Hebrew*, with a *Chaldean* termination. So *zamar*, by a beautiful metaphor from *pruning trees*, means in *Hebrew* to *compose verses*; and thence, by an easy transition, to *sing* them; and in *Pahlavi*, we see the verb *zamrûniten*, 'to sing', with its forms *zamrûnemî*, I sing, and *zamrûnid*, he sing; the verbal terminations of the *Persian* being added to the *Chaldaick* root. Now all those words are integral parts of the language, not adventitious to it, like the *Arabick* nouns and verbals engrafted on modern *Persian*; and this distinction convinces me, that the dialect of the *Gabrs*, which they pretend to be that of ZERRÂTUSHT, and of which BAHMAN gave me a variety of written specimens, is a late invention



invention of their Priests, or subsequent at least to the *Muselman* invasion. For, although it may be possible, that a few of their sacred books were preserved, as he used to assert, in sheets of lead or copper at the bottom of wells, near *Tezd*, yet as the conquerors had not only a spiritual but a political interest in persecuting a warlike, robust, and indignant race of irreconcilable conquered subjects, a long time must have elapsed before the hidden scriptures could have been safely brought to light; and few who could perfectly understand them, must then have remained: but, as they continued to profess among themselves the religion of their forefathers, it became expedient for the *Mubeds* to supply the lost or mutilated works of their legislator by new compositions, partly from their imperfect recollection, and partly from such moral and religious knowledge as they gleaned, most probably, among the *Christians*, with whom they had an intercourse. One rule we may fairly establish in deciding the question, Whether the books of the modern *Gabrs* were anterior to the invasion of the *Arabs*? When an *Arabick* noun occurs in them, changed only by the spirit of the *Chaldean* idiom, as *wertà* for *werd*, a rose; *daba* for *dbahab*, gold, or *demàn* for *zemàn*, time, we may allow it to have been ancient  
*Pahlavi*;

*Pahlavi*; but when we meet with verbal nouns or infinitives evidently formed by the rule of *Arabian* grammar, we may be sure, that the phrases in which they occur are comparatively modern; and not a single passage which BAHMAN produced from the books of his religion would abide this test.

WE come now to the language of the *Zend*. And here I must impart a discovery which I lately made, and from which we may draw the most interesting consequences. M. ANQUETIL, who had the merit of undertaking a voyage to *India*, in his earliest youth, with no other view than to recover the writings of ZERATUSHT, and who would have acquired a brilliant reputation in *France*, if he had not sullied it by his immoderate vanity and virulence of temper, which alienated the goodwill even of his own countrymen, has exhibited in his work, entitled *Zendavestâ*, two vocabularies in *Zend* and *Pahlavi*, which he had found in an approved collection of *Rawâyât*, or *Traditional Pieces*, in modern *Persian*. Of his *Pahlavi* no more needs be said, than that it strongly confirms my opinion concerning the *Chaldaick* origin of that language; but when I perused the *Zend* glossary, I was inexpressibly surprised to find, that six or seven words in ten were pure *Sanscrit*, and even some of their inflexions

flexions formed by the rules of the *Vyākaran*; as *yushmācam*, the genitive plural of *yushmad*. Now M. ANQVETIL most certainly, and the *Persian* compiler most probably, had no knowledge of *Sanserit*; and could not, therefore, have invented a list of *Sanserit* words: it is, therefore, an authentick list of *Zend* words which had been preserved in books or by tradition; and it follows, that the language of the *Zend* was at least a dialect of the *Sanserit*, approaching perhaps as nearly to it as the *Prærit*, or other popular idioms, which we know to have been spoken in *India* two thousand years ago.

FROM all these facts it is a necessary consequence, that the oldest discoverable languages of *Persia* were *Chaldaick* and *Sanserit*; and that, when they had ceased to be vernacular, the *Pahlavi* and *Zend* were deduced from them respectively; and the *Parsi* either from the *Zend*, or immediately from the dialect of the *Brāhmans*: but all had, perhaps, a mixture of *Tartarian*; for the best lexicographers assert, that numberless words in ancient *Persian* are taken from the language of the *Cimmerians*, or the *Tartars* of *Ripehak*: so that the three families, whose lineage we have examined in former Discourses, had left visible traces of themselves in *Irān*, long before the *Tartars* and *Arabs* had rushed from their deserts, and returned

returned to that very country from which in all probability they originally proceeded, and which the *Hindus* had abandoned in an earlier age, with positive commands from their legislators to revisit it no more.

I close this head with observing, that no supposition of a mere political or commercial intercourse between the different nations will account for the *Sanscrit* and *Chaldaick* words which we find in the old *Persian* tongues; because they are, in the first place, too numerous to have been introduced by such means, and, secondly, are not the names of exotick animals, commodities, or arts, but those of material elements, parts of the body, natural objects and relations, affections of the mind, and other ideas common to the whole race of man.

If a nation of *Hindus*, it may be urged, ever possessed or governed the country of *Iran*, we should find in the very ancient ruins of the temple or palace now called *the Throne of JEMSHID*, some inscriptions in *Dévanagari*, or at least in the characters on the stones at *Elephanta*, where the sculpture is unquestionably *Indian*, or in those on the *Staff of FÉRÚZ SHA'H*, which exist in the heart of *India*; and such inscriptions we probably should have found, if that edifice had not been erected after the migration of the *Bráhmans* from *Iran*, and the



the violent schism in the *Persian* religion, of which we shall presently speak: for, although the popular name of the building at *Istakhr*, or *Persepolis*, be no certain proof that it was raised in the time of JEMSHID, yet such a fact might easily have been preserved by tradition; and we shall soon have abundant evidence, that the temple was posterior to the reign of the *Hindu* Monarchs. The *cypresses*, indeed, which are represented with the figures in procession, might induce a reader of the *Shádnámah* to believe, that the sculptures related to the new faith introduced by ZERA'TUSHT; but as a cypress is a beautiful ornament, and as many of the figures appear inconsistent with the reformed adoration of fire, we must have recourse to stronger proofs, that the *Takhti* JEMSHID was erected after CAYUMERS. The building has lately been visited, and the characters on it examined, by Mr. FRANKLIN; from whom we learn, that NIEBUHR has delineated them with great accuracy: but without such testimony I should have suspected the correctness of the delineation; because the *Danish* traveller has exhibited two inscriptions in modern *Persian*, and one of them from the same place, which cannot have been exactly transcribed. They are very elegant verses of NI'ZA'MI' and SADI', on the instability of human greatness; but so ill engraved, or so ill copied, that if I had

not had them nearly by art, I should not have been able to read them; and M. ROUSSEAU of *Isfahan*, who translated them with shameful inaccuracy, must have been deceived by the badness of the copy, or he never would have created a new King WAKAM, by forming one word of JIM, and the particle prefixed to it. Assuming, however, that we may reason as conclusively on the characters published by NIEBUHR as we might on the monuments themselves, were they now before us, we may begin with observing, as CHARDIN had observed on the very spot, that they bear no resemblance whatever to the letters used by the *Gabrs* in their copies of the *Vendidad*. This I once urged, in an amicable debate with BAHMAN, as a proof, that the *Zend* letters were a modern invention; but he seemed to hear me without surprise; and insisted that the letters to which I alluded, and which he had often seen, were monumental characters never used in books, and intended either to conceal some religious mysteries from the vulgar, or to display the art of the Sculptor, like the embellished *Cissick* and *Nagari* in several *Arabian* and *Indian* monuments. He wondered, that any man could seriously doubt the antiquity of the *Pahlavi* letters; and, in truth, the inscription behind the horse of *Rustam*, which NIEBUHR has

has also given us, is apparently *Pahlavi*, and might with some pains be decyphered. That character was extremely rude, and seems to have been written, like the *Roman* and the *Arabick*, in a variety of hands; for I remember to have examined a rare collection of old *Persian* coins in the Museum of the great Anatomist WILLIAM HUNTER, and though I believe the legends to be *Pahlavi*, and had no doubt that they were coins of *Parthian* Kings, yet I could not read the inscriptions without wasting more time than I had then at command, in comparing the letters, and ascertaining the proportions in which they severally occurred. The gross *Pahlavi* was improved by ZERA'TUSHT, or his disciples, into an elegant and perspicuous character, in which the *Zend-vesta* was copied; and both were written from the right hand to the left like other *Chaldaick* alphabets, for they are manifestly both of *Chaldean* origin; but the *Zend* has the singular advantage of expressing all the long and short vowels, by distinct marks, in the body of each word, and all the words are distinguished by full-points between them; so that if modern *Persian* were unmixed with *Arabick*, it might be written in *Zend* with the greatest convenience, as anyone may perceive by copying in that character a few pages of the *Shánámah*.



As to the unknown inscriptions in the palace of JEMSHI'D, it may reasonably be doubted, whether they contain a system of letters which any nation ever adopted. In *five* of them, the letters, which are separated by points, may be reduced to forty, at least I can distinguish no more essentially different; and they all seem to be regular variations and compositions of a straight line and an angular figure like the head of a javelin, or a leaf (to use the language of botanists) *bearded and lanced*. Many of the *Runick* letters appear to have been formed of similar elements; and it has been observed, that the writings at *Persepolis* bear a strong resemblance to that which the *Irish* call *Ogham*. The word *Agam*, in *Sanscrit*, means *mysterious knowledge*; but I dare not affirm, that the two words had a common origin; and only mean to suggest, that if the characters in question be really alphabetical, they were probably secret and sacerdotal; or a mere cypher, perhaps, of which the priests only had a key. They might, I imagine, be decyphered, if the language were certainly known; but in all the other inscriptions of the same sort, the characters are too complex, and the variations of them too numerous, to admit an opinion, that they could be symbols of articulate sound; for even the *Négari* system, which has more distinct letters



letters than any known alphabet, consists only of forty-nine simple characters, two of which are mere substitutions, and four of little use in *Sanſcrit*, or in any other language; while the more complicated figures, exhibited by NIEBUHR, must be as numerous at least as the *Chinese* keys, which are the signs of ideas only, and some of which resemble the old *Persian* letters at *Iſtakhr*: the *Daniſh* traveller was convinced, from his own observation, that they were written from the left hand, like all the characters used by *Hindu* nations. But I must leave this dark subject, which I cannot illuminate, with a remark formerly made by myself, that the square *Chaldaick* letters, a few of which are found in the *Persian* ruins, appear to have been originally the same with the *Dévanagari*, before the latter were enclosed, as we now see them, in angular frames.

II. THE primeval religion of *Iran*, if we rely on the authorities adduced by MOHSANI FÂNI, was that which NEWTON calls the oldest (and it may justly be called the noblest) of all religions; “ a firm belief that one Supreme God  
 “ made the world by his power, and continually governed it by his providence; a  
 “ pious fear, love, and adoration of him; a  
 “ due reverence for parents and aged persons;  
 “ a fraternal affection for the whole human  
 “ species; and a compassionate tenderness even

“ for the brute creation.” A system of devotion so pure and sublime could hardly, among mortals, be of long duration; and we learn from *The Dabistan*, that the popular worship of the *Iranians*, under HUSHANG, was purely *Sabian*; a word of which I cannot offer any certain etymology, but which has been deduced by grammarians from *Sabâ*, a *host*, and particularly the *host of heaven*, or the *celestial bodies*, in the adoration of which the *Sabian* ritual is believed to have consisted. There is a description in the learned work just mentioned of the several *Persian* temples dedicated to the sun and planets, of the images adored in them, and of the magnificent processions to them on prescribed festivals, one of which is probably represented by sculpture in the ruined city of JEMSHID. But the planetary worship in *Persia* seems only a part of a far more complicated religion which we now find in these *Indian* provinces; for MOHSAN assures us, that, in the opinion of the best informed *Persians* who professed the faith of HUSHANG, distinguished from that of ZERA'TUSHT, the first monarch of *Iran* and of the whole earth was MAHABAD, a word apparently *Sanscrit*, who divided the people into four orders, the *religious*, the *military*, the *commercial*, and the *servile*; to which he assigned names unquestionably the same in their origin with those now applied to the four

primary

primary classes of the *Hindus*. They added, that he received from the Creator, and promulgated among men, *a sacred book in a heavenly language*, to which the *Muselman* author gives the *Arabick* title of *Defdtir*, or Regulations, but the original name of which he has not mentioned; and that *fourteen* MAHA'BA'DS had appeared or would appear in human shapes for the government of this world. Now when we know that the *Hindus* believe in *fourteen* MENU'S, or celestial personages with similar functions, the first of whom left a book of *regulations*, or *divine ordinances*, which they hold equal to the *Veda*, and the language of which they believe to be that of the Gods, we can hardly doubt, that the first corruption of the purest and oldest religion was the system of *Indian* theology invented by the *Brahmans*, and prevalent in those territories where the book of MAHA'BA'D, or MENU, is at this hour the standard of all religious and moral duties. The accession of CAY'UMERS to the throne of *Persia*, in the eighth or ninth century before CHRIST, seems to have been accompanied by a considerable revolution both in government and religion. He was most probably of a different race from the *Mababadians*, who preceded him, and began perhaps the new system of national faith which HU'SHANG, whose name it bears, completed; but the reformation



was partial ; for, while they rejected the complex polytheism of their predecessors, they retained the laws of MAHA'BA'D with a superstitious veneration for the sun, the planets, and fire ; thus resembling the *Hindu* sects called *Sauras* and *Sagnicas* ; the second of which is very numerous at *Banares*, where many *agni-bôtras* are continually blazing ; and where the *Sagnicas*, when they enter on their sacerdotal office, kindle, with two pieces of the hard wood *Semi*, a fire which they keep lighted through their lives for their nuptial ceremony, the performance of solemn sacrifices, the obsequies of departed ancestors, and their own funeral pile. This remarkable rite was continued by ZERA'TUSHT ; who reformed the old religion by the addition of genii, or angels, presiding over months and days ; of new ceremonies in the veneration shewn to fire ; of a new work which he pretended to have received from heaven ; and, above all, by establishing the actual adoration of One Supreme Being. He was born, according to MOHSAN, in the district of *Raj* ; and it was he, not, as AMMIANUS asserts, his protector GUSHTASB, who travelled into *India*, that he might receive information from the *Brâhmans* in theology and ethics. It is barely possible that PYTHAGORAS knew him in the capital of *Irak* ; but the *Grecian* sage must then



then have been far advanced in years, and we have no certain evidence of an intercourse between the two philosophers. The reformed religion of *Persia* continued in force till that country was subdued by the *Muselmans*; and, without studying the *Zend*, we have ample information concerning it in the modern *Persian* writings of several who professed it. BAHMAN always named ZERA'TUSHT with reverence; but he was in truth a pure Theist, and strongly disclaimed any adoration of the *fire* or other elements: he denied that the doctrine of two co-eval principles, supremely good and supremely bad, formed any part of his faith; and he often repeated with emphasis the verses of FIRDAUSI on the prostration of CYRUS and his paternal grandfather before the blazing altar: "Think  
 " not that they were adorers of fire, for that  
 " element was only an exalted object, on the  
 " lustre of which they fixed their eyes; they  
 " humbled themselves a whole week before  
 " God; and, if thy understanding be ever so  
 " little exerted, thou must acknowledge thy  
 " dependence on the Being supremely pure." In a story, SADI, near the close of his beautiful *Bûstân*, concerning the idol of SO'MANA'T'H, or MAHA'DE'VA, confounds the religion of the *Hindus* with that of the *Gabrs*, calling the *Brabmans* not only *Moghs* (which might be justified by a passage in the *Mefnavi*), but even  
 readers

readers of the *Zend* and *Pâzend*. Now, whether this confusion proceeded from real or pretended ignorance, I cannot decide; but am as firmly convinced that the doctrines of the *Zend* were distinct from those of the *Veda*, as I am that the religion of the *Brâhmans*, with whom we converse every day, prevailed in *Persia* before the accession of CAYUMERS, whom the *Parsi's*, from respect to his memory, consider as the first of men, although they believe in an universal deluge before his reign.

WITH the religion of the old *Persians* their philosophy (or as much as we know of it) was intimately connected; for they were assiduous observers of the luminaries, which they adored and established, according to MOHSAN, who confirms, in some degree, the fragments of BEROSUS, a number of artificial cycles with distinct names, which seem to indicate a knowledge of the period in which the equinoxes appear to revolve: they are said also to have known the most wonderful powers of nature, and thence to have acquired the fame of magicians and enchanter. But I will only detain you with a few remarks on that metaphysical theology which has been professed immemorially by a numerous sect of *Persians* and *Hindus*, was carried in part into *Greece*, and prevails even now among the learned *Muselmans*, who

sometimes avow it without reserve. The modern philosophers of this persuasion are called *Sûfis*, either from the *Greek* word for a *sage*, or from the *woollen* mantle which they used to wear in some provinces of *Persia*. Their fundamental tenets are, That nothing exists absolutely but God; that the human soul is an emanation from his essence, and, though divided for a time from its heavenly source, will be finally re-united with it; that the highest possible happiness will arise from its re-union; and that the chief good of mankind, in this transitory world, consists in as perfect an *union* with the External Spirit as the incumbrances of a mortal frame will allow; that, for this purpose, they should break all *connection* (or *ta'alluk*, as they call it) with extrinſick objects, and pass through life without *attachments*, as a swimmer in the ocean strikes freely without the impediment of clothes; that they should be straight and free as the cypress, whose fruit is hardly perceptible, and not sink under a load like fruit-trees *attached* to a trellis; that if mere earthly charms have power to influence the soul, the *idea* of celestial beauty must overwhelm it in extatick delight; that, for want of apt words to express the divine perfections and the ardour of devotion, we must borrow such expressions as approach the nearest to our ideas, and speak of *Beauty* and  
*Love*

*Love* in a transcendant and mystical sense ; that, like a *reed* torn from its native bank, like *wax* separated from its delicious honey, the soul of man bewails its disunion with *melancholy musick*, and sheds burning tears, like the lighted taper, waiting passionately for the moment of its extinction, as a disengagement from earthly trammels, and the means of returning to its Only Beloved. Such in part (for I omit the minuter and more subtle metaphysicks of the *Sûfis*, which are mentioned in *The Dabistân*) is the wild and enthusiastick religion of the modern *Persian* poets, especially of the sweet HA'FIZ and the great *Maulavî*; such is the system of the *Vidanti* philosophers and best lyrick poets of *India*; and as it was a system of the highest antiquity in both nations, it may be added to the many other proofs of an immemorial affinity between them.

III. ON the ancient monuments of *Persian* sculpture and architecture, we have already made such observations as were sufficient for our purpose; nor will you be surpris'd at the diversity between the figures at *Elephanta*, which are manifestly *Hindu*, and those at *Persepolis*, which are merely *Sabian*, if you concur with me in believing, that the *Takhti Jamshîd* was erected after the time of CAY'UMERS, when the *Brâhmans* had migrated from *Iran*,  
and



and when their intricate mythology had been superseded by the simpler adoration of the planets and of fire.

IV. As to the *sciences* or *arts* of the old *Persians*, I have little to say ; and no complete evidence of them is found to exist. MOHSAN speaks more than once of ancient verses in the *Pahlavi* language ; and BAHMAN assured me, that some scanty remains of them had been preserved. Their music and painting, which NAZA'MI celebrated, have irrecoverably perished ; and in regard to MA'NI', the painter and impostor, whose book of drawings called *Artang*, which he pretended to be divine, is supposed to have been destroyed by the *Chinese*, in whose dominions he had sought refuge, the whole tale is too modern to throw any light on the questions before us concerning the origin of nations and the inhabitants of the primitive world.

Thus has it been proved, by clear evidence and plain reasoning, that a powerful monarchy was established in *Iran* long before the *Assyrian*, or *Pishdadi*, government ; that it was in truth a *Hindu* monarchy, though if any chuse to call it *Cusian*, *Caslean*, or *Seythian*, we shall not enter into a debate on mere names ; that it subsisted many centuries ; and that its history has been ingrafted on that of the *Hindus*, who founded the monarchies of *Ayidhya* and *Indraprestha* ;

*preſſha* ; that the language of the firſt *Perſian* empire was the mother of the *Sanſcrit*, and conſequently of the *Zend* and *Parſi*, as well as of *Greek*, *Latin*, and *Gothick* ; that the language of the *Aſſyrians* was the parent of *Chaldaick* and *Pahlavi* ; and that the primary *Tartarian* language alſo had been current in the ſame empire ; although, as the *Tartars* had no books, or even letters, we cannot with certainty trace their unpoliſhed and variable idioms. We diſcover therefore in *Perſia*, at the earlieſt dawn of hiſtory, the three diſtinct races of men, whom I deſcribed on former occaſions as poſſeſſors of *India*, *Arabia*, *Tartary* ; and whether they were collected in *Irân* from diſtant regions, or diverged from it, as from a common center, we ſhall eaſily determine by the following conſiderations.

LET us obſerve in the firſt place the central poſition of *Irân*, which is bounded by *Arabia*, by *Tartary*, and by *India* ; whiſt *Arabia* lies contiguous to *Iran* only, but is remote from *Tartary*, and divided even from the ſkirts of *India* by a conſiderable gulf ; no country, therefore, but *Perſia* ſeems likely to have ſent forth its colonies to all the kingdoms of *Aſia*. The *Brâhmans* could never have migrated from *India* to *Irân*, becauſe they are expreſſly forbidden by their oldeſt exiſting laws to leave the region which they inhabit at this day ; the  
*Arabs*

*Arabs* have not even a tradition of an emigration into *Persia* before MOHAMMED, nor had they indeed any inducement to quit their beautiful and extensive domains : and as to the *Tartars*, we have no trace in history of their departure from their plains and forests till the invasion of the *Medes*, who, according to etymologists, were the sons of MADAI ; and even they were conducted by princes of an *Affyrian* family. The *three* races therefore, whom we have already mentioned (and more than three we have not yet found), migrated from *Irân*, as from their common country. And thus the *Saxon* chronicle, I presume from good authority, brings the first inhabitants of *Britain* from *Armenia* ; while a late very learned writer concludes, after all his laborious researches, that the *Goths* or *Scythians* came from *Persia* ; and another contends with great force, that both the *Irish* and old *Britons* proceeded severally from the borders of the *Caspian* ; a coincidence of conclusions from different media, by persons wholly unconnected, which could scarce have happened, if they were not grounded on solid principles. We may therefore hold this proposition firmly established, That *Irân*, or *Persia* in its largest sense, was the true center of population, of knowledge, of languages, and of arts ; which, instead of travelling westward only, as it has been fancifully supposed, or eastward, as might

might with equal reason have been asserted, were expanded in all directions to all the regions of the world in which the *Hindu* race had settled under various denominations. But, whether *Asia* has not produced other races of men distinct from the *Hindus*, the *Arabs*, or the *Tartars*, or whether any apparent diversity may not have sprung from an intermixture of those three in different proportions, must be the subject of a future enquiry.

DIS



## DISSERTATION VII.

ON THE

## C H I N E S E.

BEING THE SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE  
 DELIVERED TO THE SOCIETY FEB. 25, 1790.

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GENTLEMEN,

**A**LTHOUGH we are at this moment considerably nearer to the frontier of *China* than to the farthest limit of the *British* dominions in *Hindustan*, yet the first step that we shall take in the philosophical journey which I propose for your entertainment at the present meeting, will carry us to the utmost verge of the habitable globe known to the best geographers of old *Greece* and *Egypt*; beyond the boundary of whose knowledge we shall discern, from the heights of the northern mountains, an Empire nearly equal in surface to a square of fifteen degrees; an Empire, of which I do not

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mean

mean to assign the precise limits, but which we may consider, for the purpose of this Dissertation, as embraced on two sides by *Tartary* and *India*, while the ocean separates its other sides from various *Asiatick* isles of great importance in the commercial system of *Europe*: annexed to that immense tract of land is the peninsula of *Corea*, which a vast oval basin divides from *Nipon* or *Japan*; a celebrated and imperial island, bearing in arts and in arms, in advantage of situation, but not in felicity of government, a pre-eminence among eastern kingdoms analogous to that of *Britain* among the nations of the west. So many climates are included in so prodigious an area, that while the principal emporium of *China* lies nearly under the tropick, its metropolis enjoys the temperature of *Samarkand*: such too is the diversity of soil in its fifteen provinces, that, while some of them are exquisitely fertile, richly cultivated, and extremely populous, others are barren and rocky, dry and unfruitful, with plains as wild or mountains as rugged as any in *Scythia*; and those either wholly deserted, or peopled by savage hordes, who, if they be not still independent, have been very lately subdued by the perfidy, rather than the valour, of a monarch, who has perpetuated his own breach of faith in a *Chinese* poem, of which I have seen a translation.

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THE word *China*, concerning which I shall offer some new remarks, is well known to the people whom we call the *Chinese*; but they never apply it (I speak of the learned among them) to themselves, or to their country: themselves, according to Father VISDELOU, they describe as the *people of HAN*, or of some other illustrious family, by the memory of whose actions they flatter their national pride; and their country they call *Chum-cuë*, or the *Central Kingdom*, representing it in their symbolical characters by a parallelogram exactly bisected: at other times they distinguish it by the words *Tien-hia*, or *What is under Heaven*, meaning *all that is valuable on Earth*. Since they never name themselves with moderation, they would have no right to complain, if they knew that *European* authors have ever spoken of them in the extremes of applause or of censure: by some they have been extolled as the oldest and the wisest, as the most learned and most ingenious, of nations; whilst others have derided their pretensions to antiquity, condemned their government as abominable, and arraigned their manners as inhuman, without allowing them an element of science, or a single art, for which they have not been indebted to some more ancient and more civilized race of men. The truth perhaps lies, where we usually find it,  
between

between the extremes ; but it is not my design to accuse or to defend the *Chinese*, to depress or to aggrandize them : I shall confine myself to the discussion of a question connected with my former Discourses, and far less easy to be solved than any hitherto started : “ Whence came “ the singular people, who long had governed “ *China*, before they were conquered by the “ *Tartars* ? ” On this problem, the solution of which has no concern, indeed, with our political or commercial interests, but a very material connection, if I mistake not, with interests of a higher nature, four opinions have been advanced, and all rather peremptorily asserted, than supported by argument and evidence. By a few writers it has been urged, that the *Chinese* are an original race, who have dwelled for ages, if not from eternity, in the land which they now possess : by others, and chiefly by the missionaries, it is asserted, that they sprang from the same stock with the *Hebrews* and *Arabs* : a third assertion is, that of the *Arabs* themselves, and of M. PAUW, who hold it indubitable that they were originally *Tartars* descending in wild clans from the steeps of *Imaus* : and a fourth, at least as dogmatically pronounced as any of the preceding, is that of the *Brahmans*, who decide, without allowing any appeal from their decision, that the *Chinas* (for



(for so they are named in *Sanferit*) were *Hindus* of the *Cshatriya*, or military, class, who, abandoning the privileges of their tribe, rambled in different bodies to the north-east of *Bengal*; and forgetting by degrees the rites and religion of their ancestors, established separate principalities, which were afterwards united in the plains and valleys which are now possessed by them. If any one of the three last opinions be just, the first of them must necessarily be relinquished; but of those three, the first cannot possibly be sustained; because it rests on no firmer support than a foolish remark, whether true or false, that *Sem*, in *Chinese*, means *life* and *procreation*; and because a tea-plant is not more different from a palm, than a *Chinese* from an *Arab*: they are men, indeed, as the tea and the palm are vegetables; but human sagacity could not, I believe, discover any other trace of resemblance between them. One of the *Arabs*, indeed, an account of whose voyage to *India* and *Cbina* has been translated by *RENAUDOT*, thought the *Chinese* not only handsomer (according to his ideas of beauty) than the *Hindus*, but even more like his own countrymen in features, habiliments, carriages, manners and ceremonies; and this may be true, without proving an actual resemblance between the *Chinese* and *Arabs*, ex-

cept in dress and complexion. The next opinion is more connected with that of the *Brāhmins* than M. PAUW, probably, imagined; for though he tells us expressly, that by *Scythians* he meant the *Turks* or *Tartars*, yet the dragon on the standard, and some other peculiarities, from which he would infer a clear affinity between the old *Tartars* and the *Chinese*, belonged indubitably to those *Scythians* who are known to have been *Goths*; and the *Goths* had manifestly a common lineage with the *Hindus*, if his own argument, in the Preface to his Researches, on the similarity of language be, as all men agree it is, irrefragable. That the *Chinese* were anciently of a *Tartarian* stock, is a proposition, which I cannot otherwise disprove for the present, than by insisting on the total dissimilarity of the two races in manners and arts, particularly in the fine arts of imagination, which the *Tartars*, by their own account, never cultivated: but if we shew strong grounds for believing that the first *Chinese* were actually of an *Indian* race, it will follow, that M. PAUW and the *Arabs* are mistaken: it is to the discussion of this new, and, in my opinion, very interesting point, that I shall confine the remainder of my Discourse.

IN the *Sanscrit* Institutes of Civil and Religious Duties, revealed, as the *Hindus* believe,  
by

by MENU, the son of BRAHMA', we find the following curious passage: "Many families of  
 " the military class, having gradually aban-  
 " doned the ordinances of the *Veda*, and  
 " the company of *Bráhmans*, lived in a state  
 " of degradation; as the people of *Pundraca*  
 " and *Odra*, those of *Dravira* and *Cam-*  
 " *bója*, the *Yavanas* and *Sacas*, the *Páradas*  
 " and *Pahlavas*, the *Cbinas* and some other  
 " nations." A full comment on this text  
 would here be superfluous; but since the tes-  
 timony of the *Indian* author, who, though  
 certainly not a divine personage, was as cer-  
 tainly a very ancient lawyer, moralist, and his-  
 torian, is direct and positive, disinterested and  
 unsuspected, it would, I think, decide the  
 question before us, if we could be sure that  
 the word *Cbina* signified a *Chinese*, as all the  
*Pandits*, whom I have separately consulted,  
 assert with one voice: they assure me, that  
 the *Cbinas* of MENU settled in a fine country  
 to the north-east of *Gaur*, and to the east of  
*Cámarúp* and *Népál*; that they have long been,  
 and still are, famed as ingenious artificers; and  
 that they had themselves seen old *Chinese* idols,  
 which bore a manifest relation to the primitive  
 religion of *India*, before BUDDHA's appear-  
 ance in it. A well-informed *Pandit* shewed  
 me a *Sanserit* book in *Cashmirian* letters, which,

he said, was revealed by SIVA himself, and entitled *Saṅgama*: he read to me a whole chapter of it on the heterodox opinions of the *Chinas*, who were divided, says the author, into near two hundred clans. I then laid before him a map of *Asia*; and when I pointed to *Cashmir*, his own country, he instantly placed his finger on the north-western provinces of *China*, where the *Chinas*, he said, first established themselves; but he added, that *Mahā-china*, which was also mentioned in his book, extended to the eastern and southern oceans. I believe, nevertheless, that the *Chinese* Empire, as we now call it, was not formed when the laws of *MENU* were collected; and for this belief, so repugnant to the general opinion, I am bound to offer my best reasons. If the outline of history and chronology for the last two thousand years be correctly traced, (and we must be hardy scepticks to doubt it) the poems of *CA'LI'DA's* were composed before the beginning of our era: now it is clear from internal and external evidence, that the *Rāmāyan* and *Mahābhārat* were considerably older than the productions of that poet; and it appears from the style and metre of the *Dharmā-Sūtra*, revealed by *MENU*, that it was reduced to writing long before the age of *VA'LMIC* or *VYA'sA*, the second of whom names it with applause:



applause : we shall not, therefore, be thought extravagant, if we place the compiler of those laws between a thousand and fifteen hundred years before CHRIST ; especially as BUDDHA, whose age is pretty well ascertained, is not mentioned in them ; but in the twelfth century before our era, the *Chinese* Empire was at least in its cradle. This fact it is necessary to prove ; and my first witness is CONFUCIUS himself. I know to what keen satire I shall expose myself by citing that philosopher, after the bitter sarcasms of M. PAUW against him and against the translators of his mutilated, but valuable, works ; yet I quote, without scruple, the book entitled Lu's Yu', of which I possess the original with a verbal translation, and which I know to be sufficiently authentick for my present purpose : in the second part of it CON-FU-TSU declares, that " although he, " like other men, could relate, as mere lessons " of morality, the histories of the first and " second imperial houses, yet, *for want of evi-* " *dence*, he could give no certain account of " them." Now, if the *Chinese* themselves do not even pretend, that any historical monument existed, in the age of CONFUCIUS, preceding the rise of their third dynasty about eleven hundred years before the *Christian* epoch, we may justly conclude, that the reign of VU'VAM was in the infancy of their Empire, which

which hardly grew to maturity till some ages after that prince ; and it has been asserted by very learned *Europeans*, that even of the third dynasty, which he has the fame of having raised, no unsuspected memorial can now be produced.

It was not till the eighth century before the birth of Our Saviour, that a small kingdom was erected in the province of *Shen-si*, the capital of which stood nearly in the *thirty-fifth* degree of northern latitude, and about *five* degrees to the west of *Si-gan* : both the country and its metropolis were called *Chin*, and the dominion of its princes was gradually extended to the east and west. A king of *Chin*, who makes a figure in the *Sháhnáma* among the allies of *AFRA'SIYA'B*, was, I presume, a sovereign of the country just mentioned ; and the river of *Chin*, which the poet frequently names as the limit of his eastern geography, seems to have been the *Yellow River*, which the *Chinese* introduce at the beginning of their fabulous annals. I should be tempted to expatiate on so curious a subject ; but the present occasion allows nothing superfluous, and permits me only to add, that *MAN-GUKHA'N* died in the middle of the thirteenth century, before the city of *Chin*, which was afterwards taken by *KUBLAI* ; and that the poets of *Irán* perpetually allude to the districts around it which they celebrate, with *Chegil* and *Kho-*  
*ten,*

*ten*, for a number of musk-animals roving on their hills. The territory of *Chin*, so called by the old *Hindus*, by the *Persians*, and by the *Chinese* (while the *Greeks* and *Arabs* were obliged, by their defective articulation, to mis-call it *Sin*), gave its name to a race of Emperors, whose tyranny made their memory so unpopular, that the modern inhabitants of *China* hold the word in abhorrence, and speak of themselves as the people of a milder and more virtuous dynasty ; but it is highly probable that the whole nation descended from the *Chinas* of *MENU*, and mixing with the *Tartars*, by whom the plains of *Honan* and the more southern provinces were thinly inhabited, formed by degrees the race of men whom we now see in possession of the noblest empire in *Asia*.

IN support of an opinion, which I offer as the result of long and anxious inquiries, I should regularly proceed to examine the language and letters, religion and philosophy, of the present *Chinese*, and subjoin some remarks on their ancient monuments, on their science, and on their arts, both liberal and mechanical : but their spoken *language*, not having been preserved by the usual symbols of articulate sounds, must have been for many ages in a continual flux ; their *letters*, if we may so call them, are merely the symbols of ideas ; their popular  
*religion*

*religion* was imported from *India* in an age comparatively modern; and their *philosophy* seems yet in so rude a state, as hardly to deserve the appellation; they have no *ancient monuments*, from which their origin can be traced even by plausible conjecture; their *sciences* are wholly *exotick*, and their *mechanical arts* have nothing in them characteristic of a particular family; nothing which any set of men, in a country so highly favoured by nature, might not have discovered and improved. They have, indeed, both national music and national poetry, and both of them beautifully pathetick; but of painting, sculpture, or architecture, as arts of imagination, they seem (like other *Asiatics*) to have no idea. Instead, therefore, of enlarging separately on each of those heads, I shall briefly enquire, how far the literature and religious practices of *China* confirm or oppose the proposition which I have advanced.

THE declared and fixed opinion of M. DE GUIGNES, on the subject before us, is nearly connected with that of the *Brahmans*: he maintains, that the *Chinese* were emigrants from *Egypt*; and the *Egyptians*, or *Ethiopians* (for they were clearly the same people), had indubitably a common origin with the old natives of *India*, as the affinity of their languages, and of their instructions, both religious and political, fully evinces; but that *China* was peopled a few centuries



centuries before our era by a colony from the banks of the *Nile*, though neither *Persians* nor *Arabs*, *Tartars* nor *Hindus* ever heard of such an emigration, is a paradox, which the bare authority even of so learned a man cannot support ; and since reason grounded on facts can alone decide such a question, we have a right to demand clearer evidence and stronger arguments than any that he has adduced. The hieroglyphicks of *Egypt* bear, indeed, a strong resemblance to the mythological sculptures and paintings of *India*, but seem wholly dissimilar to the symbolical system of the *Chinese*, which might easily have been invented (as they assert) by an individual, and might very naturally have been contrived by the first *Chinas*, or out-cast *Hindus*, who either never knew, or had forgotten, the alphabetical characters of their wiser ancestors. As to the table and bust of *Isis*, they seem to be given up as modern forgeries ; but, if they were indisputably genuine, they would be nothing to the purpose ; for the letters on the bust appear to have been designed as alphabetical ; and the fabricator of them (if they really were fabricated in *Europe*) was uncommonly happy, since two or three of them are exactly the same with those on a metal pillar yet standing in the north of *India*. In *Egypt*, if we can rely on the testimony of the *Greeks*, who studied no language but their own, there

there were two sets of alphabetical characters ; the one *popular*, like the various letters used in our *Indian* provinces ; and the other *sacerdotal*, like the *Dévanâgarî*, especially that form of it which we see in the *Veda* : besides which, they had two sorts of *sacred sculpture* ; the one simple, like the figures of BUDDHA and the three RA'MAS ; and the other allegorical, like the images of GANE'SA, or *Divine Wisdom*, and ISA'NI', or *Nature*, with all their emblematical accompaniments : but the *real character* of the *Chinese* appears wholly distinct from any *Egyptian* writing, either mysterious or popular ; and as to the fancy of M. DE GUIGNES, that the complicated symbols of *China* were at first no more than *Phœnician* monograms, let us hope, that he has abandoned so wild a conceit, which he started probably with no other view than to display his ingenuity and learning.

WE have ocular proof, that the few radical characters of the *Chinese* were originally (like our astronomical and chymical symbols) the pictures or out-lines of visible objects, or figurative signs for simple ideas, which they have multiplied by the most ingenious combinations and the liveliest metaphors ; but as the system is peculiar, I believe, to themselves and the *Japanese*, it would be idle and ostentatious to enlarge on it at present ; and, for the reasons already intimated, it neither corroborates nor weakens  
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the opinion which I endeavour to support. The same may as truly be said of their *spoken* language; for, independently of its constant fluctuation during a series of ages, it has the peculiarity of excluding four or five sounds which other nations articulate, and is clipped into monosyllables, even when the ideas expressed by them, and the written symbols for those ideas, are very complex. This has arisen, I suppose, from the singular habits of the people; for though their common tongue be so *musically* accented as to form a kind of recitative, yet it wants those *grammatical* accents, without which all human tongues would appear monosyllabick: thus *Amita*, with an accent on the first syllable, means, in the *Sanscrit* language, immeasurable; and the natives of *Bengal* pronounce it *Omīto*; but when the religion of BUDDHA, the son of *Miyā*, was carried hence into *China*, the people of that country, unable to pronounce the name of their new God, called him *Foe*, the son of *Moye*, and divided his epithet *Amita* into three syllables O-MI-TO, annexing to them certain ideas of their own, and expressing them in writing by three distinct symbols. We may judge from this instance, whether a comparison of their spoken tongue with the dialects of other nations can lead to any certain conclusion as to their origin; yet the instance which I have  
given

given supplies me with an argument from analogy, which I produce as conjectural only; but which appears more plausible the oftener I consider it. The BUDDHA of the *Hindus* is unquestionably the Foe of *China*; but the great progenitor of the *Chinese* is also named by them FO-HI, where the second monosyllable signifies, it seems, a *Victim*: now the ancestor of that military tribe whom the *Hindus* call the *Chandrawansa*, or children of the Moon, was, according to their *Puranas* or legends, BUDDHA, or the genius of the planet *Mercury*, from whom, in the *fifth* degree, descended a prince named DRUHYA; whom his father YAYA'TI sent in exile to the east of *Hindustán*, with this imprecation, "May thy progeny be ignorant of the *Veda*!" The name of the banished prince could not be pronounced by the modern *Chinese*; and though I dare not conjecture, that the last syllable of it has been changed into YAO, I may nevertheless observe, that YAO was the *fifth* in descent from FO-HI, or at least the fifth mortal in the first imperial dynasty; that all *Chinese* history before him is considered, by the *Chinese* themselves, as poetical or fabulous; that his father TI-co, like the *Indian* king YAYA'TI, was the first prince who married several women; and that FO-HI, the head of their race, appeared, say the *Chinese*, in a province of the west, and held his court in the territory



story of *Chin*, where the rovers mentioned by the *India* legislator are supposed to have settled. Another circumstance in the parallel is very remarkable : according to Father DE PREMARE, in his Tract on *Chinese* Mythology, the mother of FO-HI was the daughter of *Heaven*, surnamed *Flower-loving* ; and as the nymph was walking alone on the bank of a river with a similar name, she found herself on a sudden encircled by a *rainbow* ; soon after which she became pregnant, and at the end of twelve years was delivered of a son radiant as herself, who, among other titles, had that of *Su'i*, or *Star of the Year*. Now, in the mythological system of the *Hindus*, the nymph RO'HINI, who presides over the fourth lunar mansion, was the favourite mistress of SO'MA, or the *Moon*, among whose numerous epithets, we find *Cumudanâyaca*, or *delighting in a species of water-flower*, that blossoms at night ; and their offspring was BUDHA, regent of a planet, and called also, from the names of his parents, RAUHINE'YA or SAUMYA. It is true, that the learned Missionary explains the word *Su'i* by JUPITER ; but an exact resemblance between two such fables could not have been expected ; and it is sufficient for my purpose that they seem to have a family likeness. The God BUDHA, say the *Indians*, married ILA, whose

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whose father was preserved in a miraculous ark from an universal deluge: now, although I cannot insist with confidence, that the *rain-bow* in the *Chinese* fable alludes to the *Mosaick* narrative of the Flood, nor build any solid argument on the divine personage NIU-VA, of whose character, and even of whose sex, the historians of *China* speak very doubtfully; I may, nevertheless, assure you, after full enquiry and consideration, that the *Chinese*, like the *Hindus*, believe this earth to have been wholly covered with water, which, in works of undisputed authenticity, they describe as *flowing abundant'y, then subsiding, and separating the higher from the lower age of mankind*; that the *division of time*, from which their poetical history begins, just preceded the appearance of FO-HI on the mountains of *Chin*, but that the great *inundation*, in the reign of YAO, was either confined to the low-lands of his kingdom, if the whole account of it be not a fable, or if it contain any allusion to the Flood of NOAH, has been ignorantly misplaced by the *Chinese* Annalists.

THE importation of a new religion into *China*, in the first century of our Era, must lead us to suppose, that the former system, whatever it was, had been found inadequate to the purpose of restraining the great body of the people from those offences against conscience  
and

and virtue which the civil power could not reach; and it is hardly possible that, without such restrictions, any government could long have subsisted with felicity; for no government can long subsist without equal justice, and justice cannot be administered without the sanctions of religion. Of the religious opinions entertained by CONFUCIUS and his followers we may glean a general notion from the fragments of their works translated by COUPLET: they professed a firm belief in the Supreme God, and gave a demonstration of his Being, and of his Providence, from the exquisite beauty and perfection of the celestial bodies, and the wonderful order of nature in the whole fabrick of the visible world. From this belief they deduced a system of Ethicks, which the philosopher sums up in a few words at the close of the *Lányù*: “He,” says CONFUCIUS, “who shall be fully persuaded, that the Lord of Heaven governs the Universe, who shall in all things chuse moderation, who shall perfectly know his own species, and so act among them, that his life and manners may conform to his knowledge of God and Man, may be truly said to discharge all the duties of a sage, and to be far exalted above the common herd of the human race.” But such a religion and such morality could never have

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been



been general; and we find, that the people of *China* had an ancient system of ceremonies and superstitions, which the government and the philosophers appear to have encouraged, and which has an apparent affinity with some parts of the oldest *Indian* worship: they believe in the agency of genii, or tutelary spirits, presiding over the stars and the clouds, over lakes and rivers, mountains, valleys, and woods, over certain regions and towns, over all the elements (of which, like the *Hindus*, they reckon five), and particularly over *fire*, the most brilliant of them: to those deities they offered victims on high places; and the following passage from the *Shi-cin*, or *Book of Odes*, is very much in the style of the *Bráhmans*: “ Even they who  
 “ perform a sacrifice with due reverence can-  
 “ not perfectly assure themselves, that the di-  
 “ vine spirits accept their oblations; and far  
 “ less can they who adore the Gods with lan-  
 “ guor and ositancy clearly perceive their  
 “ sacred illapses.”

THESE are imperfect traces indeed, but they are traces of an affinity between the religion of *MENU* and that of the *Chinas*, whom he names among the apostates from it. *M. LE GENTIL*, observed; he says, a strong resemblance between the funeral rites of the *Chinese* and the *Sráddha* of the *Hindus*; and *M. BAILLY*, after a learned investigation, concludes



concludes, that “ even the puerile and absurd  
 “ stories of the *Chinese* fabulists contain a rem-  
 “ nant of ancient *Indian* history, with a faint  
 “ sketch of the first *Hindu* ages.”

As the *Bauddhas*, indeed, were *Hindus*, it may naturally be imagined, that they carried into *China* many ceremonies practised in their own country; but the *Bauddhas* positively forbade the immolation of cattle; yet we know, that various animals, even bulls and men, were anciently sacrificed by the *Chinese*; besides which we discover many singular marks of relation between them and the old *Hindus*: as in the remarkable period of *four hundred and thirty-two thousand*, and the cycle of *sixty*, years; in the predilection for the mystical number *nine*; in many similar fasts and great festivals, especially at the solstices and equinoxes; in the just mentioned obsequies, consisting of rice and fruits, offered to the manes of their ancestors; in the dread of dying childless, lest such offering should be intermitted; and, perhaps, in their common abhorrence of *red* objects, which the *Indians* carried so far, that *MENU* himself, where he allows a *Bráhma*n to trade, if he cannot otherwise support life, absolutely forbids “ his trafficking in any  
 “ sort of *red* cloths, whether linen or woollen,  
 “ or made of woven bark.”

ALL the circumstances which have been mentioned under the two heads of *literature* and *religion* seem collectively to prove (as far as such a question admits proof) that the *Chinese* and *Hindus* were originally the same people ; but having been separated near four thousand years, have retained few strong features of their ancient consanguinity, especially as the *Hindus* have preserved their old language and ritual, while the *Chinese* very soon lost both ; and the *Hindus* have constantly intermarried among themselves, while the *Chinese*, by a mixture of *Tartarian* blood from the time of their first establishment, have at length formed a race distinct in appearance both from *Indians* and *Tartars*.

A SIMILAR diversity has arisen, I believe, from similar causes, between the people of *China* and *Japan* ; in the second of which nations we have now, or soon shall have, as correct and as ample instruction as can possibly be obtained without a perfect acquaintance with the *Chinese* characters.

KEMPFER has taken from M. TITSINGH the honour of being the first, and he from KEMPFER that of being the only *European*, who, by a long residence in *Japan*, and a familiar intercourse with the principal natives of it, has been able to collect authentic materials for the  
natural

natural and civil history of a country *secluded*, as the *Romans* used to say of our own Island, from *the rest of the World*. The works of those illustrious travellers will confirm and embellish each other; and when M. TITSINGH shall have acquired a knowledge of *Chinese*, to which a part of his leisure in *Java* will be devoted, his precious collection of books in that language, on the laws and revolutions, the natural productions, the arts, manufactures, and sciences, of *Japan*, will be in his hands an inexhaustible mine of new and important information. Both he and his predecessor assert with confidence, and I doubt not with truth, that the *Japanese* would resent, as an insult on their dignity, the bare suggestion of their descent from the *Chinese*, whom they surpass in several of the mechanical arts, and, what is of greater consequence, in military spirit; but they do not, I understand, mean to deny, that they are a branch of the same ancient stem with the people of *China*; and, were that fact ever so warmly contested by them, it might be proved by an invincible argument, if the preceding part of this Discourse, on the origin of the *Chinese*, be thought to contain just reasoning.

In the first place, it seems inconceivable, that the *Japanese*, who never appear to have been conquerors or conquered, should have



adopted the whole system of *Chinese* literature with all its inconveniences and intricacies, if an immemorial connexion had not subsisted between the two nations; or, in other words, if the bold and ingenious race who peopled *Japan* in the middle of the thirteenth century before CHRIST, and about six hundred years afterwards established their monarchy, had not carried with them the letters and learning which they and the *Chinese* had possessed in common; but my principal argument is, that the *Hindu* or *Egyptian* idolatry has prevailed in *Japan* from the earliest ages; and among the idols worshipped, according to KEMPFER, in that country before the innovations of SA'CYA or BUDDHA, whom the *Japanese* also call AMIDA, we find many of those which we see every day in the temples of *Engal*; particularly the Goddess with many arms, representing the powers of nature, in *Egypt* named ISIS, and here ISA'NI' or ISI', whose image, as it is exhibited by the *German* traveller, all the *Bráhmans* to whom I shewed it immediately recognized with a mixture of pleasure and enthusiasm. It is very true, that the *Chinese* differ widely from the natives of *Japan* in their vernacular dialects, in external manners, and perhaps in the strength of their mental faculties; but as wide a difference is observable among all the nations of



of the *Gothic* family ; and we might account even for a greater dissimilarity, by considering the number of ages during which the several swarms have been separated from the great *Indian* hive, to which they primarily belonged.

THE modern *Japanese* gave KEMPFER the idea of polished *Tartars* ; and it is reasonable to believe, that the people of *Japan*, who were originally *Hindus* of the martial class, and advanced farther eastward than the *Chinas*, have, like them, insensibly changed their features and characters by intermarriages with various *Tartarian* tribes, whom they found loosely scattered over their isles, or who afterwards fixed their abode in them.

HAVING now shewn, in five Discourses, that the *Arabs* and *Tartars* were originally distinct races, while the *Hindus*, *Chinese* and *Japanese*, proceeded from another ancient stem, and that all the three stems may be traced to *Iran*, as to a common centre, from which it is highly probable, that they diverged in various directions about four thousand years ago, I may seem to have accomplished my design of investigating the origin of the *Asiatick* nations ; but the questions which I undertook to discuss are not yet ripe for a strict analytical argument ; and it will first be necessary to examine with scrupulous attention all the detached or insulated races  
of

of men, who either inhabit the borders of *India, Arabia, Tartary, Persia, and China*, or are interspersed in the mountainous and uncultivated parts of those extensive regions.

To this examination I shall, at our next Annual Meeting, allot an entire Discourse; and if, after all our inquiries, no more than *three* primitive races can be found, it will be a subsequent consideration, whether those three stocks had one common root, and, if they had, by what means that root was preserved amid the violent shocks which our whole globe appears evidently to have sustained.

DIS-

## DISSERTATION VIII.

## REMARKS.

## ON THE

## ISLAND

## OF

## HINZUAN OR JOHANNA.

*HINZU'AN* (a name which has been gradually corrupted into *Anzuame*, *Anjuan*, *Juanny*, and *Johanna*) has been governed about two centuries by a colony of *Arabs*, and exhibits a curious instance of the slow approaches towards civilization which are made by a small community, with many natural advantages, but with few means of improving them. An account of this *African* island, in which we hear the language and see the manners of *Arabia*, may neither be uninteresting in itself, nor foreign to the objects of enquiry proposed at the institution of our Society.

ON Monday the 28th of July 1783, after a voyage in the *Crocodile* of ten weeks and two days from the rugged islands of *Cape Verd*, our eyes were delighted with a prospect so beautiful, that neither a painter nor a poet could perfectly represent it, and so cheering to us, that it can justly be conceived by such only as have been in our preceding situation. It was the sun rising in full splendour on the isle of *Mayata* (as the seamen called it), which we had joyfully distinguished the preceding afternoon by the height of its peak, and which now appeared at no great distance from the windows of our cabin; while *Hinslan*, for which we had so long panted, was plainly discernible a-head, where its high lands presented themselves with remarkable boldness. The weather was fair; the water smooth; and a gentle breeze drove us easily before dinner-time round a rock, on which the *Brilliant* struck just a year before, into a commodious road\*, where we dropped our anchor early in the evening: we had seen *Mobila*, another sister island, in the course of the day.

THE frigate was presently surrounded with canoes, and the deck soon crowded with natives of all ranks, from the high-born chief, who washed linen, to the half-naked slave,

\* Lat. 12°. 10'. 47". S. Long. 44°. 25' 5". E. by the Master,



who only paddled. Most of them had letters of recommendation from *Englishmen*, which none of them were able to read, though they spoke *English* intelligibly; and some appeared vain of titles which our countrymen had given them in play, according to their supposed stations; we had lords, dukes, and princes on board, soliciting our custom, and importuning us for presents. In fact, they were too sensible to be proud of empty sounds, but justly imagined, that those ridiculous titles would serve as marks of distinction, and, by attracting notice, procure for them something substantial. The only men of real consequence in the island, whom we saw before we landed, were the Governor ABDULLAH, second cousin to the King, and his brother ALWI', with their several sons; all of whom will again be particularly mentioned: they understood *Arabic*, seemed zealots in the *Mohammedan* faith, and admired my copies of the *Alkoran*; some verses of which they read, whilst ALWI' perused the opening of another *Arabian* manuscript, and explained it in *English* more accurately than could have been expected.

THE next morning shewed us the island in all its beauty; and the scene was so diversified, that a distinct view of it could hardly have been exhibited by the best pencil: you must, therefore, be satisfied with a mere description, written

ten on the very spot, and compared attentively with the natural landscape. We were at anchor in a fine bay, and before us was a vast amphitheatre, of which you may form a general notion by picturing in your minds a multitude of hills infinitely varied in size and figure, and then supposing them to be thrown together, with a kind of artless symmetry, in all imaginable positions. The back ground was a series of mountains, one of which is pointed, near half a mile perpendicularly high from the level of the sea, and little more than three miles from the shore: all of them were richly clothed with wood, chiefly fruit-trees, of an exquisite verdure. I had seen many a mountain of a stupendous height in *Wales* and *Switzerland*, but never saw one before, round the bosom of which the clouds were almost continually rolling, while its green summit rose flourishing above them, and received from them an additional brightness. Next to this distant range of hills was another tier, part of which appeared charmingly verdant, and part rather barren; but the contrast of colours changed even this nakedness into a beauty: nearer still were innumerable mountains, or rather cliffs, which brought down their verdure and fertility quite to the beach; so that every shade of green, the sweetest of colours, was displayed at one view  
by

by land and by water. But nothing conduced more to the variety of this enchanting prospect than the many rows of palm-trees, especially the tall and graceful Areca's, on the shores, in the valleys, and on the ridges of hills, where one might almost suppose them to have been planted regularly by design. A more beautiful appearance can scarce be conceived, than such a number of elegant palms in such a situation, with luxuriant tops, like verdant plumes, placed at just intervals, and shewing between them part of the remoter landscape, while they left the rest to be supplied by the beholder's imagination. The town of *Matsamido* lay on our left, remarkable at a distance for the tower of the principal Mosque, which was built by HALI'MAH, a Queen of the island, from whom the present King is descended: a little on our right was a small town, called *Bantani*. Neither the territory of *Nice*, with its olives, date-trees, and cypresses, nor the isles of *Hires*, with their delightful orange-groves, appeared so charming to me as the view from the road of *Hinzian*; which, nevertheless, is far surpassed, as the Captain of the *Crocodile* assured us, by many of the islands in the southern ocean. If life were not too short for the complete discharge of all our respective duties, publick and private, and for the acquisition even of necessary knowledge



ledge in any degree of perfection, with how much pleasure and improvement might a great part of it be spent in admiring the beauties of this wonderful orb, and contemplating the nature of man in all its varieties!

We hastened to tread on firm land, to which we had been so long disused, and went on shore, after breakfast, to see the town, and return the Governor's visit. As we walked, attended by a crowd of natives, I surprized them by reading aloud an *Arabick* inscription over the gate of a *Mosque*, and still more, when I entered it, by explaining four sentences; which were written very distinctly on the wall, signifying, "that  
" the world was given us for our own edifica-  
" tion, not for the purpose of raising sumptuous buildings; life, for the discharge of  
" moral and religious duties, not for pleasurable  
" indulgences; wealth, to be liberally bestowed, not avariciously hoarded; and learning to produce good actions, not empty disputes." We could not but respect the temple even of a false prophet, in which we found such excellent morality: we saw nothing better among the *Romish* trumpery in the church at *Madera*.

WHEN we came to ABDULLAH's house, we were conducted through a small court-yard into an open room, on each side of which was  
a large



a large and convenient sofa, and above it a high bed-place in a dark recess, over which a chintz counterpane hung down from the ceiling: this is the general form of the best rooms in the island; and most of the tolerable houses have a similar apartment on the opposite side of the court, that there may be at all hours a place in the shade for dinner or for repose. We were entertained with ripe dates from *Yemen*, and the milk of cocoa-nuts; but the heat of the room, which seemed accessible to all who chose to enter it, and the scent of musk or civet, with which it was perfumed, soon made us desirous of breathing a purer air; nor could I be detained long by the *Arabick* manuscripts which the Governor produced, but which appeared of little use, and consequently of no value, except to such as love mere curiosities: one of them, indeed, relating to the penal law of the *Mohammedans*, I would gladly have purchased at a just price; but he knew not what to ask, and I knew that better books on that subject might be procured in *Bengal*. He then offered me a black boy for one of my Alkorans, and pressed me to barter an *Indian* dress, which he had seen on board the ship, for a cow and calf; the golden slippers attracted him most, since his wife, he said, would like to wear them; and for that reason I made him a present of them;

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but had destined the book and the robe for his superior. No high opinion could be formed of SAYYAD ABDULLAH, who seemed very eager for gain, and very servile where he expected it.

OUR next visit was to SHAIKH SA'LIM, the King's eldest son; and if we had seen him first, the state of civilization in *Hingun* would have appeared at its lowest ebb; the worst *English* hackney in the worst stable is better lodged, and looks more princely than this heir apparent; but though his mien and apparel were extremely savage, yet allowance should have been made for his illness, which, as we afterwards learned, was an abscess in the spleen, a disorder not uncommon in that country, and frequently cured, agreeably to the *Arabian* practice, by the actual cautery. He was incessantly chewing pieces of the *Areca-nut* with shell-lime; a custom borrowed, I suppose, from the *Indians*, who greatly improve the composition with spices and betel-leaves, to which they formerly added camphor: all the natives of rank chewed it, but not, I think, to so great an excess. Prince SA'LIM from time to time gazed at himself with complacency in a piece of broken looking-glass, which was glued on a small board, a specimen of wretchedness which we observed in no other house; but many circumstances convinced us that the apparently low

low condition of his Royal Highness, who was not on bad terms with his father, and seemed not to want authority, proceeded wholly from his avarice. His brother HAMDULLAH, who generally resides in the town of *Domoni*, has a very different character, being esteemed a man of worth, good sense, and learning: he had come the day before to *Matsumido*, on hearing that an *English* frigate was in the road; and I having gone out for a few minutes to read an *Arabick* inscription, found him on my return devouring a manuscript, which I had left with some of the company. He is a *Kadi* or *Mohammedan* judge; and as he seemed to have more knowledge than his countrymen, I was extremely concerned that I had so little conversation with him. The King, SHAIKH AHMED, has a younger son, named ABDULLAH, whose usual residence is in the town of *Wani*, which he seldom leaves, as the state of his health is very infirm. Since the succession to the title and authority of Sultan is not unalterably fixed in one line, but requires confirmation by the Chiefs of the island, it is not improbable that they may hereafter be conferred on Prince HAMDULLAH.

A LITTLE beyond the hole in which SA'LIM received us, was his *Haram*, or the apartment of his women, which he permitted us all to see,



not through politeness to strangers, as we believed at first, but, as I learned afterwards from his own lips, in expectation of a present: we saw only two or three miserable creatures with their heads covered, while the favourite, as we supposed, stood behind a coarse curtain, and shewed her ankles under it loaded with silver rings; which, if she was capable of reflection, she must have considered as glittering fetters rather than ornaments; but a rational being would have preferred the condition of a wild beast, exposed to perils and hunger in a forest, to the splendid misery of being wife or mistress to SA'LIM.

BEFORE we returned, ALWI' was desirous of shewing me his books; but the day was too far advanced, and I promised to visit him some other morning. The Governor, however, prevailed on us to see his place in the country, where he invited us to dine the next day: the walk was extremely pleasant from the town to the side of a rivulet, which formed in one part a small pool very convenient for bathing, and thence, through groves and alleys, to the foot of a hill; but the dining-room was little better than an open barn, and was recommended only by the coolness of its shade. ABDULLAH would accompany us on our return to the ship, together with two *Mustis*, who spoke *Arabick* indifferently,



differently, and seemed eager to see all my manuscripts; but they were very moderately learned, and gazed with stupid wonder on a fine copy of the *Hamásab* and on other collections of ancient poetry.

EARLY the next morning a black messenger, with a tawney lad as his interpreter, came from Prince SA'LIM; who, having broken his perspective-glass, wished to procure another by purchase or barter: a polite answer was returned, and steps taken to gratify his wishes. As we on our part expressed a desire to visit the King at *Domból*, the Prince's messenger told us, that his master would, no doubt, lend us palanquins (for there was not an horse in the island), and order a sufficient number of his vassals to carry us, whom we might pay for their trouble, as we thought just: we commissioned him, therefore, to ask that favour, and begged that all might be ready for our excursion before sun-rise, that we might escape the heat of the noon, which, though it was the middle of winter, we had found excessive. The boy, whose name was COMBO MADI' staid with us longer than his companion: there was something in his look so ingenuous, and in his broken *English* so simple, that we encouraged him to continue his innocent prattle. He wrote and read *Arabick* tolerably well, and

set down at my desire the names of several towns in the island, which, He first told me, was properly called *Hinzuidn*. The fault of begging for whatever he liked, he had in common with the Governor and other nobles ; but hardly in a greater degree : his first petition for some lavender-water was readily granted ; and a small bottle of it was so acceptable to him, that, if we had suffered him, he would have kissed our feet ; but it was not for himself that he rejoiced so extravagantly ; he told us, with tears starting from his eyes, that his mother would be pleased with it, and the idea of her pleasure seemed to fill him with rapture : never did I see filial affection more warmly felt, or more tenderly and, in my opinion, unaffectedly expressed ; yet this boy was not a favourite of the officers, who thought him artful. His mother's name, he said, was FA'TIMA ; and he importuned us to visit her ; conceiving, I suppose, that all mankind must love and admire her ; we promised to gratify him ; and, having made him several presents, permitted him to return. As he reminded me of ALADDIN in the *Arabian* tale, I designed to give him that name in a commendatory letter, which he pressed me to write, instead of ST. DOMINGO, as some *European* visitor had ridiculously called him ; but, since the allusion would not have been generally

nerally known, and since the title of *Alau'din*, or *Eminence in Faith*, might have offended his superiors, I thought it advisable for him to keep his *African* name.

A VERY indifferent dinner was prepared for us at the house of the Governor, whom we did not see the whole day, as it was the beginning of *Ramadin*, the *Mohammedan Lent*, and he was engaged in his devotions, or made them his excuse; but his eldest son sat by us, while we dined, together with MU'SA, who was employed, jointly with his brother HUSAIN, as purveyor to the Captain of the frigate.

HAVING observed a very elegant shrub, that grew about six feet high in the court-yard, but was not then in flower, I learned with pleasure, that it was *binna*, of which I had read so much in *Arabian* poems, and which *European* botanists have ridiculously named *Lawsonia*. MU'SA bruised some of the leaves, and, having moistened them with water, applied them to our nails, and the tips of our fingers, which in a short time became of a dark orange-scarlet. I had before conceived a different idea of this dye, and imagined, that it was used by the *Arabs* to imitate the natural redness of those parts in young and healthy persons, which in all countries must be considered as a beauty: perhaps a less quantity of *binna*, or the same

differently prepared, might have produced that effect. The old men in *Arabia* used the famed ye to conceal their gray hair, while their daughters were dyeing their lips and gums black, to set off the whiteness of their teeth; so universal in all nations and ages are personal vanity, and a love of disguising truth; though in all cases, the farther our species recede from nature, the farther they depart from true beauty; and men at least should disdain to use artifice or deceit for any purpose or on any occasion: if the women of rank at *Paris*, or those in *London* who wish to imitate them, be inclined to call the *Arabs* barbarians, let them view their own head-dresses and cheeks in a glass, and, if they have left no room for blushes, be inwardly at least ashamed of their censure.

IN the afternoon I walked a long way up the mountains in a winding path amid plants and trees no less new than beautiful, and regretted exceedingly that very few of them were in blossom, as I should then have had leisure to examine them. Curiosity led me from hill to hill; and I came at last to the sources of a rivulet, which we had passed near the shore, and from which the ship was to be supplied with excellent water. I saw no birds on the mountains but Guinea-fowl, which might have been easily caught; no insects were troublesome to me but  
mosquitos;



mosquitos; and I had no fear of venomous reptiles, having been assured that the air was too pure for any to exist in it; but I was often unwillingly the cause of fear to the gentle and harmless lizard, who ran among the shrubs. On my return I missed the path by which I had ascended; but having met some blacks laden with yams and plantains, I was by them directed to another, which led me round, through a charming grove of cocoa-trees, to the Governor's country-seat, where our entertainment was closed by a fillabub, which the *English* had taught the *Muselmans* to make for them.

WE received no answer from SA'LIM; nor, indeed, expected one, since we took for granted that he could not but approve our intention of visiting his father; and we went on shore before sun-rise, in full expectation of a pleasant excursion to *Domini*, but we were happily disappointed. The servants at the Prince's door told us coolly, that their master was indisposed, and, as they believed, asleep; that he had given them no orders concerning his palanquins, and that they durst not disturb him. ALWI' soon came to pay us his compliments, and was followed by his eldest son AHMED, with whom we walked to the gardens of the two Princes SA'LIM and HAMBULLAH; the situation was naturally good but wild and desolate; and in SA'LIM's garden,

garden, which we entered through a miserable hovel, we saw a convenient bathing-place, well built with stone, but then in great disorder ; and a shed by way of summer-house, like that under which we dined at the Governor's, but smaller, and less neat. On the ground lay a kind of cradle, about six feet long, and little more than one foot in breadth, made of cords twisted in a sort of clumsy net-work, with a long thick bamboo fixed to each side of it : this we heard with surprize was a royal palanquin, and one of the vehicles in which we were to have been rocked on men's shoulders over the mountains. I had much conversation with AHMED, whom I found intelligent and communicative. He told me, that several of his countrymen composed songs and tunes ; that he was himself a passionate lover of poetry and music, and that if we would dine at his house he would play and sing to us. We declined his invitation to dinner, as we had made a conditional promise if ever we passed a day at *Matsumado* to sit at our curry with BA'NA' GIBU, an honest man, of whom we purchased eggs and vegetables, and to whom some *Englishmen* had given the title of Lord, which made him extremely vain ; we could therefore make SAY-YAD AHMED only a morning visit. He sung a hymn or two in *Arabic*, and accompanied his dawdling though pathetic psalmody with a kind of

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of mandoline, which he touched with an awkward quill : the instrument was very imperfect, but seemed to give him delight. The names of the strings were written on it in *Arabian* or *Indian* figures, simple and compounded ; but I could not think them worth copying. He gave Captain WILLIAMSON, who wished to present some literary curiosities to the library at *Dublin*, a small roll, containing a hymn in *Arabick* letters, but in the language of *Mombaza*, which was mixed with *Arabick* ; but it hardly deserved examination, since the study of languages has little intrinsic value, and is only useful as the instrument of real knowledge, which we can scarce expect from the poets of *Mozambique*. AHMED would, I believe, have heard our *European* airs (I always except French melody) with rapture ; for his favourite tune was a common *Irish* jig, with which he seemed wonderfully affected.

ON our return to the beach I thought of visiting old ALWI', according to my promise, and Prince SA'LIM, whose character I had not then discovered. I resolved for that purpose to stay on shore alone, our dinner with GIBU having been fixed at an early hour. ALWI' shewed me his manuscripts, which chiefly related to the ceremonies and ordinances of his own religion ; and one of them, which I had formerly seen in  
*Europe,*



*Europe*, was a collection of sublime and elegant hymns in praise of MOHAMMED, with explanatory notes in the margin. I requested him to read one of them after the manner of the *Arabs*, and he chaunted it in a strain by no means unpleasing ; but I am persuaded that he understood it very imperfectly. The room, which was open to the street, was presently crowded with visitors, most of whom were *Musti's*, or *expounders of the law* ; and ALWI', desirous, perhaps, to display his zeal before them at the expence of good-breeding, directed my attention to a passage in a Commentary on the KORAN, which I found levelled at the *Christians*. The commentator, having related with some additions (but, on the whole, not inaccurately) the circumstances of the temptation, puts this speech into the mouth of the tempter : " Though I am  
" unable to delude thee, yet I will mislead by thy  
" means more human creatures than thou wilt  
" set right." " Nor was this menace vain," says the MOHAMMEDAN writer, " for the inhabitants  
" of a region many thousand leagues in extent,  
" are still so deluded by the devil, that they im-  
" piously call I'sA the son of God. Heaven pre-  
" serve us," he adds, " from blaspheming Chri-  
" stians, as well as blaspheming Jews!" Altho' a religious dispute with those obstinate zealots would have been unseasonable and fruitless, yet they deserved, I thought, a slight reprehension, as the attack seemed to be concerted among  
them,



them. "The commentator," said I, "was  
 "much to blame for passing so indiscriminate  
 "and hasty a censure: the title which gave your  
 "legislator, and gives you such offence, was of-  
 "ten applied in *Judea*, by a bold figure, agree-  
 "able to the *Hebrew idiom*, though unusual in  
 "Arabick, to *angels*, to *holy men*, and even to all  
 "mankind, who are commanded to call God  
 "their father; and in this large sense the *Apostle*  
 "to the *Romans* calls the elect the *children* of  
 "God, and the MESSIAH the *first-born among*  
 "many brethren; but the words *only-begotten*  
 "are applied transcendently and incomparably  
 "to him alone \*; and as for me, who believe  
 "the scriptures, which you also profess to be-  
 "lieve, though you assert without proof that  
 "we have altered them, I cannot refuse him an  
 "appellation, though far surpassing our reason,  
 "by which he is distinguished in the Gospel;  
 "and the believers in MUHAMMED, who ex-  
 "pressly names him the MESSIAH, and pro-  
 "nounces him to have been born of a virgin,  
 "which alone might fully justify the phrase  
 "condemned by this author, are themselves  
 "condemnable for cavilling at words, when  
 "they cannot object to the substance of our faith  
 "consistently with their own." The *Musel-*  
*mans* had nothing to say in reply; and the  
 conversation was changed.

\* Rom. viii. 29. See 1. John, iii. 1. 2. Barrow, 231, 232, 251.

I WAS astonished at the questions which ALI put to me concerning the late peace and the independence of *America*; the several powers and resources of *Britain* and *France*, *Spain* and *Holland*; the character and supposed views of the EMPEROR; the comparative strength of the *Russian*, *Imperial*, and *Othman* armies, and their respective modes of bringing their forces to action. I answered him without reserve, except on the state of our possessions in *India*; nor were my answers lost; for I observed that all the company were variously affected by them, generally with amazement, often with concern; especially when I described to them the great force and admirable discipline of the *Austrian* army, and the stupid prejudices of the *Turks*, whom nothing can induce to abandon their old *Tartarian* habits, and exposed the weakness of their empire in *Africa*, and even in the more distant provinces of *Asia*. In return he gave me clear but general information concerning the government and commerce of his island: "his country," he said, "was poor, and produced few articles of trade; but if they could get money, *which they now preferred to play-things*," these were his words, "they might easily," he added, "procure foreign commodities, and exchange them advantageously with their neighbours in the islands and on the continent: thus with a little money," said he, "we purchase muskets, powder, balls, cutlasses, knives,

“ knives, cloths, raw cotton, and other articles  
“ brought from *Bombay*, and with those we  
“ trade to *Madagascar* for the natural produce  
“ of the country or for dollars, with which the  
“ *French* buy cattle, honey, butter, and so forth,  
“ in that island. With gold, which we receive  
“ from your ships, we can procure elephants  
“ teeth from the natives of *Mozambique*, who  
“ barter them also for ammunition and bars of  
“ iron; and the *Portuguese* in that country give  
“ us cloths of various kinds in exchange for our  
“ commodities: those cloths we dispose of lu-  
“ cratively in the three neighbouring islands;  
“ whence we bring rice, cattle, a kind of bread-  
“ fruit which grows in *Comara*, and slaves,  
“ which we buy also at other places to which  
“ we trade; and we carry on this traffic in our  
“ own vessels.”

HERE I could not help expressing my abhor-  
rence of their *Slave Trade*, and asked him by  
what law they claimed a property in rational be-  
ings, since our CREATOR had given our species  
a dominion, to be moderately exercised, over  
the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air,  
but none *to man over man*. “ By no law, an-  
swered he, “ unless necessity be a law.” There  
“ are nations in *Madagascar* and in *Africa* who  
“ know neither GOD nor his PROPHET, nor  
“ MOSES, nor DAVID, nor the MESSIAH:  
“ those nations are in perpetual war, and take  
“ many



“ many captives, whom, if they could not sell,  
“ they would certainly kill. Individuals among  
“ them are in extreme poverty, and have num-  
“ bers of children, who, if they cannot be dis-  
“ posed of, must perish through hunger, toge-  
“ ther with their miserable parents. By purchas-  
“ ing these wretches we preserve their lives,  
“ and, perhaps, those of many others, whom  
“ our money relieves. The sum of the argu-  
“ ment is this : If we buy them, they will live  
“ —if they become valuable servants, they will  
“ live comfortably ; but if they are not sold, they  
“ must die miserably.” “ There may be,” said  
I, “ such cases, but you fallaciously draw a ge-  
“ neral conclusion from a few particular in-  
“ stances ; and this is the very fallacy which,  
“ on a thousand other occasions, deludes man-  
“ kind. It is not to be doubted that a constant  
“ and gainful traffic in human creatures foment  
“ war, in which captives are always made, and  
“ keeps up that perpetual enmity which you  
“ pretend to be the *cause* of a practice in itself  
“ reprehensible, while in truth it is its *effect*.  
“ The same traffic encourages laziness in some  
“ parents, who might in general support their  
“ families by proper industry, and seduces  
“ others to stifle their natural feelings. At most,  
“ your redemption of those unhappy children  
“ can amount only to a personal contract, im-  
“ plied between you, for gratitude and reason-  
“ able



“able service on their part---for kindness and  
“humanity on your’s; but can you think your  
“part performed by disposing of them against  
“their wills, with as much indifference as if  
“you were selling cattle; especially as they  
“might become readers of the KORA’N, and  
“pillars of your Faith?” “The law,” said he,  
“forbids our selling them, when they are be-  
“lievers in the PROPHEET; and little children  
“only are sold, nor they often, or by all mas-  
“ters.” “You who believe in MUHAMMED,”  
said I, “are bound by the spirit and letter of his  
“laws to take pains that they also may believe  
“in him; and if you neglect so important a  
“duty for sordid gain, I do not see how you  
“can hope for prosperity in this world, or for  
“happiness in the next.” My old friend and  
the MURRIS assented, and muttered a few  
prayers, but probably forgot my preaching be-  
fore many minutes had passed.

So much time had slipped away in this con-  
versation, that I could make but a short visit to  
Prince SA’LIM: my view in visiting him was to  
fix the time of our journey to *Dombé* as early as  
possible on the next morning. His appearance  
was more savage than ever, and I found him in  
a disposition to complain bitterly of the English.  
“No acknowledgement,” he said, “had been  
“made for the kind attentions of himself and  
“the chief men in his country to the officers  
“and people of the *Brilliant*, though a whole  
S “year

“ year had elapsed since the wreck.” I really wondered at the forgetfulness to which alone such a neglect could be imputed ; and assured him, that I would express my opinion both in *Bengal* and in letters to *England*. “ We have little,” said he, “ to hope from letters, for when we have been paid with them instead of money, and have shewn them on board your ships, we have commonly been treated with disdain, and often with imprecations.” I assured him, that either those letters must have been written coldly and by very obscure persons, or shewn to very ill-bred men, of whom there were too many in all nations, but that a few instances of rudeness ought not to give him a general prejudice against our national character. “ But you,” said he, “ are a wealthy nation, and we are indigent ; yet though all our groves of cocoa-trees, our fruits, and our cattle are ever at your service, you always try to make hard bargains with us for what you chuse to dispose of, and frequently will neither sell nor give those things which we principally want.” “ To form,” said I, “ a just opinion of *Englishmen*, you must visit us in our own island, or at least in *India* ; here we are strangers and travellers : many of us have no design to trade in any country, and none of us think of trading in *Hinzuán*, where we stop only for refreshment. The clothes, arms, or instruments  
“ which

“ which you may want are commonly  
“ necessary or convenient to us ; but if SAY-  
“ YAD ALWI’ or his sons were to be strangers  
“ in our country, you should have no reason to  
“ boast of superior hospitality.” He then shewed  
me a second time a part of an old silk vest, with  
the star of the Order of the Thistle, and begged  
me to explain the motto ; expressing a wish that  
the Order might be conferred on him by the  
KING of ENGLAND in return for his good offices  
to the *English*. I represented to him the im-  
possibility of his being gratified, and took occa-  
sion to say, that there was more true dignity in  
their own native titles than in those of Prince,  
Duke and Lord, which had been idly given  
them, but had no conformity to their manners  
or the constitution of their Government.

THIS conversation being agreeable to neither  
of us, I changed it by desiring that the palan-  
quins and bearers might be ready next morning  
as early as possible : he answered, that his pa-  
lanquins were at our service for nothing, but  
that we must pay him ten dollars for each set of  
bearers ; that it was the stated price, and that  
MR. HASTINGS had paid it when he went to  
visit the King. This, as I learned afterwards,  
was false ; but in all events I knew that he would  
keep the dollars himself, and give nothing to the  
bearers, who deserved them better, and whom

he would compel to leave their cottages and toil for his profit. "Can you imagine, I replied, "that we would employ four and twenty men "to bear us so far on their shoulders without "rewarding them amply? But since they are "free men (so he had assured me), and not "your slaves, we will pay them in proportion "to their diligence and good behaviour; and "it becomes neither your dignity nor ours to "make a previous bargain." I shewed him an elegant copy of the *Korân*, which I destined for his father, and described the rest of my present; but he coldly asked, if that was all. Had he been King, a purse of dry dollars would have given him more pleasure than the finest or holiest manuscript. Finding him, in conversing on a variety of subjects, utterly void of intelligence or principle, I took my leave, and saw him no more, but promised to let him know for certain whether we should make our intended excursion.

We dined in tolerable comfort, and had occasion, in the course of the day, to observe the manners of the natives in the middle rank, who are called BA'NAS, and all of whom have slaves constantly at work for them. We visited the mother of COMBOMADE, who seemed in a station but little raised above indigence; and her husband, who was a mariner, bartered an *Arabick* Treatise on Astronomy and Navigation, which he had read, for a sea-compass, of which he well knew the use.

IN



IN the morning I had conversed with two very old *Arabs* of *Yemen*, who had brought some articles of trade to *Hinzuan*; and in the afternoon I met another who had come from *Muskat* (where at that time there was a civil war) to purchase, if he could, an hundred stand of arms. I told them all, that I loved their nation, and they returned my compliments with great warmth, especially the two old men, who were near fourscore, and reminded me of *Zohair* and *Ha'reth*.

So bad an account had been given me of the road over the mountains, that I dissuaded my companions from thinking of the journey, to which the Captain became rather disinclined; but as I wished to be fully acquainted with a country which I might never see again, I wrote the next day to *Sa'lim*, requesting him to lend me one palanquin, and to order a sufficient number of men; he sent me no written answer, which I ascribed rather to his incapacity than to rudeness: but the Governor, with *Alwi* and two of his sons, came on board in the evening, and said, that they had seen my letters; that all should be ready; but that I could not pay less for the men than ten dollars. I said, I would pay more, but it should be to the men themselves, according to their behaviour. They returned somewhat dissatisfied, after I had played at chess with *Alwi's* younger son,

son, in whose manner and address there was something remarkably pleasing.

BEFORE sun-rise, on the 2d of *August*, I went alone on shore, with a small basket of such provisions as I might want in the course of the day, and with some cushions to make the Prince's palanquin at least a tolerable vehicle; but the Prince was resolved to receive the dollars to which his men were entitled; and he knew that, as I was eager for the journey, he could prescribe his own terms. Old ALWI' met me on the beach, and brought excuses from SA'LIM, who, he said, was indisposed. He conducted me to his house; and seemed rather desirous of persuading me to abandon my design of visiting the King; but I assured him, that if the Prince would not supply me with proper attendants, I would walk to *Damini* with my own servants and a guide.

"SHAikh SA'LIM," he said, "was miserably avaritious; that he was ashamed of a kinsman with such a disposition; but that he was no less obstinate than covetous, and that without ten dollars paid in hand it would be impossible to procure bearers." I then gave him three guineas, which he carried or pretended to carry to SA'LIM, but returned without the change, alledging that he had no silver, and promising to give me on my return the few dollars that remained. In about an hour the ridiculous vehicle was brought by  
nine

nine sturdy blacks, who could not speak a word of *Arabick*; so that I expected no information concerning the country through which I was to travel; but ALWI' assisted me in a point of the utmost consequence. "You cannot go," said he, "without an interpreter; for the King speaks only the language of this island; but I have a servant whose name is TUMU'NI, a sensible and worthy man, who understands *English*, and is much esteemed by the King: he is known and valued all over *Hinzuan*. This man shall attend you; and you will soon be sensible of his worth."

TUMU'NI desired to carry my basket, and we set out with a prospect of fine weather, but some hours later than I had intended. I walked by the gardens of the two Princes to the skirts of the town, and came to a little village consisting of several very neat huts made chiefly with the leaves of the cocoa-tree; but the road a little farther was so stony, that I sat in the palanquin, and was borne with perfect safety over some rocks. I then desired my guide to assure the men, that I would pay them liberally; but the poor peasants, who had been brought from their farms on the hills, were not perfectly acquainted with the use of money, and treated my promise with indifference.

ABOUT five miles from *Matsamudo* lies the town of *Wani*, where SHAIKH ABDULLAH, who has already been mentioned, usually resides. I

saw it at a distance, and it seemed to be agreeably situated. When I had passed the rocky part of the road I came to a stony beach, where the sea appeared to have lost some ground, since there was a fine sand to the left, and beyond it a beautiful bay, which resembled that of *Weymouth*, and seemed equally convenient for bathing; but it did not appear to me, that the stones over which I was carried had been recently covered with water. Here I saw the frigate, and taking leave of it for two days, turned from the coast into a fine country very neatly cultivated, and consisting partly of hillocks exquisitely green, partly of plains which were then in a gaudy dress of rich yellow blossoms: my guide informed me that they were plantations of a kind of vetch which was eaten by the natives. Cottages and farms were interspersed all over this gay champaign, and the whole scene was delightful; but it was soon changed for beauties of a different sort. We descended into a cool valley, through which ran a rivulet of perfectly clear water; and there finding my vehicle uneasy, though from the laughter and merriment of my bearers I concluded them to be quite at their ease, I bade them set me down, and walked before them all the rest of the way. Mountains clothed with fine trees and flowering shrubs presented themselves on our ascent from the vale, and we proceeded for half an hour through pleasant wood-walks, where I regretted



ted the impossibility of loitering a while to examine the variety of new blossoms, which succeeded one another at every step, and the virtues as well as names of which seemed familiar to TUMU'NI. At length we descended into a valley of greater extent than the former; a river or large wintry torrent ran through it, and fell down a steep declivity at the end of it, where it seemed to be lost among rocks. Cattle were grazing on the banks of the river, and the huts of the owners appeared on the hills: a more agreeable spot I had not before seen even in *Switzerland* or *Merionethshire*; but it was followed by an assemblage of natural beauties, which I hardly expected to find in a little island twelve degrees to the south of the Line. I was not sufficiently pleased with my solitary journey to discover charms which had not actual existence, and the first effect of the contrast between *St. Jago* and *Hinzuan* had ceased. But, without any disposition to give the landscape a high colouring, I may truly say what I thought at the time, that the whole country which next presented itself as far surpassed *Ermenville* or *Blenheim*, or any other imitations of nature which I had seen in *France* or *England*, as the finest bay surpasses an artificial piece of water.

Two very high mountains covered to the summit with the richest verdure, were at some distance on my right hand, and separated from me by meadows diversified with cottages and herds,

herds, or by vallies resounding with torrents and water-falls : on my left was the sea, to which there were beautiful openings from the hills and woods ; and the road was a smooth path, naturally winding through a forest of spicy shrubs, fruit-trees, and palms. Some high trees were spangled with white blossoms equal in fragrance to orange flowers : my guide called them *Monongo's*, but the day was declining so fast that it was impossible to examine them. The variety of fruits, flowers, and birds, of which I had a transient view in this magnificent garden, would have supplied a naturalist with amusement for a month ; but I saw no remarkable insect, and no reptile of any kind. The woodland was diversified by a few pleasant glades, and new prospects were continually opened ; at length a noble view of the sea burst upon me unexpectedly, and having passed a hill or two we came to the beach, beyond which were several hills and cottages. We turned from the shore, and on the next eminence I saw the town of *Demoni* at a little distance below us : I was met by a number of natives, a few of whom spoke *Arabick*, and thinking it a convenient place for repose, I sent my guide to apprize the King of my intended visit. He returned in half an hour with a polite message ; and I walked into the town, which seemed large and populous. A great crowd accompanied me, and I was conducted to a house built  
on

on the same plan with the best houses at *Mat-samido*. In the middle of the court yard stood a large *Monongo* tree, which perfumed the air: the apartment on the left was empty; and in that on the right sat the King on a sofa or bench covered with an ordinary carpet. He rose when I entered, and, grasping my hands, placed me near him on the right; but as he could speak only the language of *Hinzuan*, I had recourse to my friend *TUMU'NI*, than whom a readier or more accurate interpreter could not have been found. I presented the King with a very handsome *Indian* dress of blue silk with golden flowers, which had been worn only at one masquerade, and with a beautiful copy of the *KORA'N*, from which I read a few verses to him: he took them with great complacency, and said, "he wished I had come by sea, that he might have loaded one of my boats with fruit and some of his finest cattle. He had seen me," he said, "on board the frigate, where he had been according to his custom in disguise, and had heard of me from his son *SHAIK HAMDULLAH*." I gave him an account of my journey, and extolled the beauties of his country: he put many questions concerning mine, and professed great regard for my nation. "But I hear," said he, "that you are a magistrate, and consequently profess peace: why are you armed with a broad-sword?" "I was a man," I said, "before I was a magistrate;

“ gistrate ; and if it should ever happen that law  
“ could not protect me, I must protect my-  
“ self.” He seemed about sixty years old, had  
a very cheerful countenance, and a great appear-  
ance of goodnature mixed with a certain dig-  
nity which distinguished him from the croud of  
ministers and officers who attended him. Our  
conversation was interrupted by notice, that it  
was the time for evening prayer ; and when he  
arose he said, “ This house is yours, and I will  
“ visit you in it after you have taken some re-  
“ freshment.” Soon after his servants brought  
a roast fowl, a rice pudding, and some other  
dishes, with papayas and very good pomegra-  
nates ; my own basket supplied the rest of the  
supper. The room was hung with old red  
cloth, and decorated with pieces of porcelain  
and festoons of English bottles : the lamps  
were placed on the ground in large sea shells ;  
and the bed-place was a recess, concealed by a  
chintz hanging, opposite to the sofa on which  
he had been sitting. Though it was not a place  
that invited repose, and the gnats were inex-  
pressibly troublesome, yet the fatigues of the  
day procured me a comfortable slumber. I was  
waked by the return of the King and his train ;  
some of whom were *Arabs*, for I heard one  
say, “ *Huwa rakid*,” or, “ he is sleeping :” there  
was an immediate silence, and I passed the night  
with little disturbance except from the unwel-  
come



come songs of the musquitos. In the morning I was equally silent and solitary ; the house appeared to be deserted, and I began to wonder what was become of TUMU'NI : he came at length, with a concern on his countenance, and told me, that the bearers had run away in the night ; but that the King, who wished to see me in another of his houses, would supply me with bearers, if he could not prevail on me to stay till a boat could be sent for. I went immediately to the King, who I found sitting on a raised sofa in a large room, the walls of which were adorned with sentences from the KORA'N in very legible characters : about fifty of his subjects were seated on the ground in a semicircle before him, and my interpreter took his place, in the midst of them. The good old King laughed heartily when he heard the adventure of the night, and said, " You will now be my guest for a week, I hope ; but seriously, if you must return soon, I will send into the country for some peasants to carry you." He then apologised for the behaviour of SHAIK SA'LIM, which he had heard from TUMU'NI, who told me afterwards he was much displeased with it, and would not fail to express his displeasure : he concluded with a long harangue on the advantages which the *English* might derive from sending a ship

ship every year from *Bombay* to trade with his subjects, and on the wonderful cheapness of their commodities, especially of their cowries. Ridiculous as the idea may seem, it showed an enlargement of the mind, a desire to promote the interest of his people, and a sense of the benefits arising from trade, which could only have been expected from a petty *African* chief, and which if he had been sovereign of *Yemen* might have been expanded into rational projects, proportioned to the extent of his dominions. I answered, that I was imperfectly acquainted with the commerce of *India*; but that I would report the substance of his conversation, and would ever bear testimony of his noble zeal for the good of his country, and to the mildness with which he governed it. As I had no inclination to pass a second night in the island, I requested leave to return without waiting for bearers: he seemed very sincere in pressing me to lengthen my visit, but had too much *Arabian* politeness to be importunate. We therefore parted; and at the request of TUMU'NI, who assured me that little time would be lost in shewing attention to one of the worthiest men in *Linsuàn*, I made a visit to the Governor of the town, whose name was NIUTEKKA: his manners were very pleasing, and he shewed me some letters from the officers of the

*Brilliant,*

*Brilliant*, which appeared to flow warm from the heart, and contained the strongest eulogium of his courtesy and liberality. He insisted on filling my baskets with some of the finest pomegranates I had ever seen ; and I left the town impressed with a very favourable opinion of the King and his Governor. When I reascended the hill attended by many of the natives, one of them told me in *Arabick*, that I was going to receive the highest mark of distinction that it was in the King's power to shew me ; and he had scarce ended, when I heard the report of a single gun : SHAIKH AHMED had saluted me with the whole of his ordnance. I waved my hat, and said, "*Allah Akbar.*" The people shouted, and I continued my journey, not without fear of inconvenience from excessive heat and the fatigue of climbing the rocks. The walk, however, was not on the whole unpleasant. I sometimes rested in the valleys, and forded all the rivulets, which refreshed me with their coolness, and supplied me with exquisite water to mix with the juice of my pomegranates, and occasionally with brandy. We were overtaken by some peasants, who came from the hills by a nearer way, and brought the King's present of a cow with her calf, and a she-goat with two kids : they had apparently been selected for their beauty, and were brought safe to *Bengal*. The prospects which had so greatly de-  
lighted

lighted me the preceding day had not yet lost their charms, though they wanted the recommendation of novelty; but I must confess, that the most delightful object in that day's walk of near ten miles was the black frigate, which I discerned at sun-set from a rock near the Prince's gardens. Close to the town I was met by a native, who, perceiving me to be weary, opened a fine cocoa-nut, which afforded me a delicious draught: he informed me, that one of his countrymen had been punished that afternoon for a theft on board the *Crocodile*; and added, that in his opinion the punishment was no less just, than the offence was disgraceful to his country. The offender, as I afterwards learned, was a youth of a good family who had married a daughter of old ALWI'; but being left alone for a moment in the cabin, and seeing a pair of blue morocco slippers, could not resist the temptation, and concealed them so ill under his gown that he was detected with the mainer. This proves that no principle of honour is instilled by education into the gentry of this island: even ALWI', when he had observed, that "in the month of *Ramadan* it was not lawful to paint with *binna* or to tell lies," and when I asked, whether both were lawful all the rest of the year, answered, that "lies were innocent, if no man was injured by them." TUMU'NI took his leave, as well satisfied as myself with our excursion:



excursion : I told him before his master, that I transferred also to him the dollars which were due to me out of the three guineas ; and that if ever they should part, I should be very glad to receive him into my service in *India*.

MR. ROBERTS, the master of the ship, had passed the day with SAYYAD AHMED ; and had learned from him a few curious circumstances concerning the government of *Hinzuan*, which he found to be a monarchy limited by an aristocracy. The King, he was told, had no power of making war by his own authority ; but if the assembly of nobles, who were from time to time convened by him, resolved on a war with any of the neighbouring islands, they defrayed the charges of it by voluntary contributions, in return for which they claimed as their own, all the booty and captives that might be taken. The hope of gain or the want of slaves is usually the real motive for such enterprizes, and ostensible pretexts are easily found : at that very time, he understood, they meditated a war, because they wanted hands for the following harvest. Their fleet consisted of sixteen or seventeen small vessels, which they manned with about two thousand five hundred islanders, armed with muskets and cutlasses, or with bows and arrows. Near two years before they had possessed themselves of two towns in *Mayata*, which they still kept and garrisoned. The ordinary

dinary expences of the government were defrayed by a tax from two hundred villages ; but the three principal towns were exempt from all taxes, except that they paid annually to the chief MUFTI, a fortieth part of the value of all their moveable property, and from that payment neither the king nor the nobles claimed an exemption. The kingly authority, by the principles of their constitution, was considered as elective, though the line of succession had not in fact been altered since the first election of a SULTAN. He was informed, that a wandering *Arab*, who had settled in the island, had, by his intrepidity in several wars, acquired the rank of a chieftain, and afterwards of a king, with limited powers ; and that he was the *grandfather* of SHAikh AHMED : I had been assured that queen HAL'MAH was his *grandmother* ; and that he was the *sixth* king ; but it must be remarked, that the words *jedd* and *jeddah* in *Arabick* are used for a male and female *ancestor* indefinitely ; and, without a correct pedigree of AHMED's family, which I expected to procure but was disappointed, it would scarce be possible to ascertain the time when his forefather obtained the highest rank in the government. In the year 1600, Captain JOHN DAVIS, who wrote an account of his voyage, found *Mayata* governed by a king, and *Ansuame*, or *Hinzuan*, by a queen, who shewed him great marks

marks of friendship : he anchored before the town of *Demos* (does he mean *Domini*?) which was as large, he says, as *Plymouth* ; and he concludes from the ruins around it, that it had once been a place of strength and grandeur. I can only say, that I observed no such ruins. Fifteen years after, Captain PEYTON and Sir THOMAS ROE touched at the *Comara* islands ; and from their several accounts it appears, that an old Sultaneſs then reſided in *Hinzuan*, but had a dominion paramount over all the iſles, three of her ſons governing *Mohila* in her name. If this be true, *SOHAILI* and the ſucceſſors of *HALI'MAH* muſt have loſt their influence over the other iſlands ; and, by renewing their dormant claim as it ſuits their convenience, they may always be furniſhed with a pretence for hoſtilities. Five generations of eldeſt ſons would account for an hundred and ſeventy of the years which have elapſed ſince DAVIS and PEYTON found *Hinzuan* ruled by a Sultaneſs ; and AHMED was of ſuch an age, that his reign may be reckoned equal to a generation : it is probable, on the whole, that *HALI'MAH* was the widow of the firſt *Arabian* king, and that her moſque has been continued in repair by his deſcendants ; ſo that we may reaſonably ſuppoſe two centuries to have paſſed, ſince a ſingle *Arab* had the courage and addreſs to eſtabliſh in that beautiful iſland a form of government, which, though bad enough

in itself, appears to have been administered with advantage to the original inhabitants. We have lately heard of civil commotions in *Hinzuàn*, which we may venture to pronounce, were not excited by any cruelty or violence of AHMED, but were probably occasioned by the insolence of an oligarchy naturally hostile to king and people. That the mountains in the *Comra* islands contain diamonds, and the precious metals, which are studiously concealed by the policy of the several governments, may be true, though I have no reason to believe it, and have only heard it asserted without evidence; but I hope that neither an expectation of such treasures, nor of any other advantage, will ever induce an *European* power to violate the first principles of justice, by assuming the sovereignty of *Hinzuàn*, which cannot answer a better purpose than that of supplying our fleets with seasonable refreshment; and although the natives have an interest in receiving us with apparent cordiality, yet, if we wish their attachment to be unfeigned and their dealings just, we must set them an example of strict honesty in the performance of our engagements. In truth, our nation is not cordially loved by the inhabitants of *Hinzuàn*, who, as it commonly happens, form a general opinion from a few instances of violence or breach of faith. Not many years ago an *European*,



pean, who had been hospitably received and liberally supported at *Matsamudo*, behaved rudely to a young married woman, who, being of low degree, was walking veiled through a street in the evening : her husband ran to protect her, and resented the rudeness, probably with menaces, possibly with actual force ; and the *European* is said to have given him a mortal wound with a knife or bayonet, which he brought, after the scuffle, from his lodging. This foul murder, which the law of nature would have justified the magistrate in punishing with death, was reported to the king, who told the Governor (I use the very words of *ALWI*) that “ it “ would be wiser to hush it up. ” *ALWI* mentioned a civil case of his own, which ought not to be concealed. When he was on the coast of *Africa* in the dominions of a very savage prince, a small *European* vessel was wrecked ; and the prince not only seized all that could be saved from the wreck, but claimed the Captain and the crew as his slaves, and treated them with ferocious insolence. *ALWI* assured me, that when he heard of the accident, he hastened to the prince, fell prostrate before him, and by tears and importunity prevailed on him to give the *Europeans* their liberty ; that he supported them at his own expence, enabled them to build another vessel, in which they sailed to *Hinzuan*, and departed thence for *Europe* or *India* : he

shewed me the Captain's promissory notes for sums which to an *African* trader must be a considerable object, but which were no price for liberty, safety, and perhaps life, which his good, though disinterested, officers had procured. I lamented, that, in my situation, it was wholly out of my power to assist ALWI' in obtaining justice ; but he urged me to deliver an *Arabick* letter from him, inclosing the notes, to the Governor-General, who, as he said, knew him well ; and I complied with his request. Since it is possible that a substantial defence may be made by the person thus accused of injustice, I will not name either him or the vessel which he had commanded ; but if he be living, and if this paper should fall into his hands, he may be induced to reflect how highly it imports our national honour, that a people whom we call savage, but who administer to our convenience, may have no just cause to reproach us with a violation of our contracts.

DIS-

## DISSERTATION IX.

ON THE

CHRONOLOGY

OF THE

H I N D U S.

WRITTEN IN JANUARY 1788.

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THE great antiquity of the *Hindus* is believed so firmly by themselves, and has been the subject of so much conversation among *Europeans*, that a short view of their chronological system, which has not yet been exhibited from certain authorities, may be acceptable to those who seek truth without partiality to received opinions, and without regarding any consequences that may result from their inquiries: the consequences, indeed, of truth cannot but be desirable, and no reasonable man will apprehend any danger to society from a general diffusion of its light; but we must not suffer ourselves to be dazzled by a false glare,

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glare, nor mistake enigmas and allegories for historical verity. Attached to no system, and as much disposed to reject the *Mosaick* history, if it be proved erroneous, as to believe it if it be confirmed by sound reasoning from indubitable evidence, I propose to lay before you a concise account of *Indian* chronology, extracted from *Sanserit* books, or collected from conversations with *Pandits*, and to subjoin a few remarks on their system, without attempting to decide a question, which I shall venture to start, “Whether it is not in fact the same  
 “ with our own, but embellished and obscured  
 “ by the fancy of their poets and the riddles  
 “ of their astronomers?”

ONE of the most curious books in *Sanserit*, and one of the oldest after the *Veda's*, is a tract *On Religious and Civil Duties*, taken, as it is believed, from the oral instructions of MENU, son of BRAHMA', to the first inhabitants of the earth. A well-collated copy of this interesting law tract is now before me; and I begin my dissertation with a few couplets from the first chapter of it: “The sun causes the division  
 “ of day and night, which are of two sorts,  
 “ those of men and those of the Gods; the  
 “ day for the labour of all creatures in their  
 “ several employments; the night for their  
 “ slumber. A month is a day and night of the  
 “ *Patriarchs*, and it is divided into two parts;  
 the



the bright half is *their* day for laborious ex-  
 ertions, the dark half *their* night for sleep.  
 A year is a day and night of the Gods, and  
 that is also divided into two halves; the day  
 is when the sun moves toward the north,  
 the night when it moves toward the south.  
 Learn now the duration of a night and day  
 of BRAHMA', with that of the ages respec-  
 tively and in order. Four thousand years of the  
 Gods they call the *Crita* (or *Satya*) age; and  
 its limits at the beginning and at the end are,  
 in like manner, as many hundreds. In the  
 three successive ages, together with their limits  
 at the beginning and end of them, are thou-  
 sands and hundreds diminished by one. This  
 aggregate of four ages, amounting to twelve  
 thousand divine years, is called an age of  
 the Gods; and a thousand such divine ages  
 added together, must be considered as a day  
 of BRAHMA': his night has also the same  
 duration. The before-mentioned age of the  
 Gods, or twelve thousand of their years  
 multiplied by seventy-one, form what is  
 named here below a *Manwantara*. There  
 are *alternate* creations and destructions of  
 worlds through innumerable *Manwantaras*;  
 the Being supremely desirable performs all  
 this again and again."

SUCH is the arrangement of infinite time,  
 which the *Hindus* believe to have been revealed  
 from

from Heaven, and which they generally understand in a literal sense: it seems to have intrinsic marks of being purely astronomical; but I will not appropriate the observations of others, nor anticipate those in particular which have been made by two or three of our Members, and which they will, I hope, communicate to the Society. A conjecture, however, of Mr. PATERSON has so much ingenuity in it, that I cannot forbear mentioning it here, especially as it seems to be confirmed by one of the couplets just cited: he supposes, that as a *month* of mortals is a day and night of the *Patriarchs* from the analogy of its bright and dark halves, so, by the same analogy, a day and night of mortals might have been considered by the ancient *Hindus* as a month of the lower world; and then a year of such months will consist only of twelve days and nights, and thirty such years will compose a lunar year of mortals; whence he surmises, that the *four million three hundred and twenty thousand* years, of which the four *Indian* ages are supposed to consist, mean only years of twelve days; and, in fact, that sum divided by *thirty*, is reduced to *an hundred and forty-four thousand*: now, a *thousand four hundred and forty* years are one *pada*, a period in the *Hindu* astronomy; and that sum multiplied by *eighteen*, amounts precisely to *twenty-five thousand nine hundred and twenty*,  
the

the number of years in which the fixed stars appear to perform their long revolution eastward. The last-mentioned sum is the product also of *an hundred and forty-four*, which, according to M. BAILLY, was an old *Indian* cycle, into *an hundred and eighty*, or the *Tartarian* period, called *Van*, and of *two thousand eight hundred and eighty* into *nine*, which is not only one of the lunar cycles, but considered by the *Hindus* as a mysterious number and an emblem of Divinity; because, if it be multiplied by any other whole number, the sum of the figures in the different products remains always nine, as the Deity, who appears in many forms, continues one immutable essence. The important period of *twenty-five thousand nine hundred and twenty* years is well known to arise from the multiplication of *three hundred and sixty* into *seventy-two*, the number of years in which a fixed star seems to move through a degree of a great circle; and although M. L. GENTIL assures us, that the modern *Hindus* believe a complete revolution of the stars to be made in *twenty-four thousand* years, or *fifty-four* seconds of a degree to be passed in one year, yet we may have reason to think, that the old *Indian* astronomers had made a more accurate calculation, but concealed their knowledge from the people under the veil of *fourteen* MANWANTARAS, *seventy-one* divine ages, compound cycles,

cycles, and years of different sorts from those of BRAHMA to those of *Pātāla*, or the *infernal regions*. If we follow the analogy suggested by MENU, and suppose only a day and night to be called a *year*, we may divide the number of years in a divine age by *three hundred and sixty*, and the quotient will be *twelve thousand*, or the number of his *divine years* in one age: but, conjecture apart, we need only compare the two periods 4,320,000 and 25,920, and we shall find that, among their common divisors, are 6, 9, 12, &c. 18, 36, 72, 144, &c. which numbers, with their several multiples, especially in a decuple progression, constitute some of the most celebrated periods of the *Chaldeans, Greeks, Tartars*, and even of the *Indians*. We cannot fail to observe, that the number 432, which appears to be the basis of the *Indian* system, is a 60th part of 25,920, and, by continuing the comparison, we might probably solve the whole enigma. In the preface to a *Varānes* almanack, I find the following wild stanza: “ A *thousand* great ages are a  
 “ day of BRAHMA; a *thousand* such days are  
 “ an *Indian* hour of VISHNU; *six hundred thou-*  
 “ *sand* such hours make a period of RUDRA;  
 “ and a million of Rudra’s (or *two quadrillions*  
 “ *five hundred and ninety-two thousand trillions*  
 “ of lunar years) are but a *second* to the Su-  
 “ preme



“preme Being.” The *Hindu* theologians deny the conclusion of the stanza to be orthodox: *time*, they say, *exists not at all with God*; and they advise the astronomers to mind their own business without meddling with theology. The astronomical verse, however, will answer our present purpose; for it shews, in the first place, that cyphers are added at pleasure to swell the periods; and if we take ten cyphers from a *Rudra*, or divide by ten thousand millions, we shall have a period of 259,200,000 years; which, divided by 60 (the usual divisor of *time* among the *Hindus*), will give 4,320,000, or a great age, which we find subdivided in the proportion of 4, 3, 2, 1, from the notion of *virtue* decreasing arithmetically in the *golden*, *silver*, *copper*, and *earthen* ages. But should it be thought improbable that the *Indian* astronomers in very early times had made more accurate observations than those of *Alexandria*, *Bagdad*, or *Maraghab*, and still more improbable that they should have relapsed without apparent cause into error, we may suppose, that they formed their divine age by an arbitrary multiplication of 24,000 by 180, according to M. LE GENTIL, or of 21,600 by 200, according to the comment on the *Sûrya Siddhânta*. Now, as it is hardly possible that such coincidences should be accidental, we may hold it  
*nearly*

nearly demonstrated, that the period of a *divine age* was at first merely astronomical, and may consequently reject it from our present enquiry into the historical or civil chronology of *India*. Let us however proceed to the avowed opinions of the *Hindus*, and see, when we have ascertained their system, whether we can reconcile it to the course of nature and the common sense of mankind.

THE aggregate of their four ages they call a *divine age*, and believe that in every thousand such ages, or in every *day* of BRAHMA', *fourteen* MENUS are successively invested by him with the sovereignty of the earth: each MENU, they suppose, transmits his empire to his sons and grandsons during a period of seventy-one *divine ages*; and such a period they name a *Manwantara*: but since *fourteen* multiplied by *seventy-one* are not quite a *thousand*, we must conclude, that *six divine ages* are allowed for intervals between the *Manwantaras*, or for the twilight of BRAHMA''s day. Thirty such days, or *Calpas*, constitute, in their opinion, a *month* of BRAHMA'; twelve such months one of his years; and an hundred such years his *age*; of which age they assert that fifty years have elapsed. We are now then, according to the *Hindus*, in the first day, or *Calpa*, of the first month of the fifty-first year of BRAHMA''s age, and in the twenty-eighth *divine*

divine age of the seventh *Manwantara*; of which divine age the *three first* human ages have passed, and *four thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight* of the fourth.

IN the present day of BRAHMA' the first MENU was surnamed SWA'YAMBHŪVA, or *Son of the Self-existent*; and it is He by whom the *Institutes of Religious and Civil Duties* are supposed to have been delivered: in his time the Deity descended at a *Sacrifice*, and by his wife SATARUPA' he had two distinguished sons and three daughters. This pair was created, for the multiplication of the human species, after that new creation of the world which the *Brāhmans* call PA'DMACALPI'YA, or the *Lotos* creation.

IF it were worth while to calculate the age of MENU's *Institutes* according to the *Brāhmans*, we must multiply four million three hundred and twenty thousand by six times seventy-one, and add to the product the number of years already past in the seventh *Manwantara*. Of the five MENU's who succeeded him, I have seen little more than the names; but the *Hindu* writings are very diffuse on the life and posterity of the *seventh* MENU, surnamed VAIVASWATA, or *Child of the Sun*. He is supposed to have had ten sons, of whom the eldest was IESHWA'CU, and to have been accom-

accompanied by seven *Rishi's*, or holy persons, whose names were, CASHYAPA, ATRI, VASISHTHA, VISWAMITRA, GAUTAMA, JAMADAGNI, and BHARADWAJA; an account which explains the opening of the fourth chapter of the *Gita*: "This immutable system of devotion," says CRISHNA, "I revealed to VIVASWAT, or the Sun; VIVASWAT declared it to his Son MENU; MENU explained it to IESHWA'CU: thus the Chief *Rishi's* know this sublime doctrine delivered from one to another."

In the reign of this *Sun-born* Monarch, the *Hindus* believe the whole earth to have been drowned, and the whole human race destroyed by a flood, except the pious Prince himself, the seven *Rishi's*, and their several wives; for they suppose his children to have been born after the Deluge. This general *pralaya*, or destruction, is the subject of the first *Purana*, or *Sacred Poem*, which consists of fourteen thousand stanzas; and the story is concisely; but clearly and elegantly told in the eighth book of the *Bhagawata*, from which I have extracted the whole, and translated it with great care, but will only present you here with an abridgement of it. "The demon HAYAGRI'VA having purloined the *Vedas* from the custody of BRAHMA', while he was reposing at the  
" close



close of the sixth *Manwantara*, the whole  
 race of men became corrupt, except the  
 seven *Rishi's*, and SATYAVRATA, who then  
 reigned in *Dravira*, a maritime region to  
 the south of *Carnata*: this Prince was per-  
 forming his ablutions in the river *Critamala*,  
 when VISHNU appeared to him in the shape  
 of a small fish, and, after several augmen-  
 tations of bulk in different waters, was  
 placed by SATYAVRATA in the ocean, where  
 he thus addressed his amazed votary: " In  
 seven days all creatures who have offended  
 me shall be destroyed by a deluge; but thou  
 shalt be secured in a capacious vessel, mira-  
 culously formed; take therefore all kinds of  
 medicinal herbs and esculent grain for food,  
 and, together with the seven holy men, your  
 respective wives, and pairs of all animals,  
 enter the ark without fear; then shalt thou  
 know God face to face, and all thy ques-  
 tions shall be answered." Saying this, he  
 disappeared; and after seven days the ocean  
 began to overflow the coasts, and the earth to  
 be flooded by constant showers, when  
 SATYAVRATA, meditating on the Deity,  
 saw a large vessel moving on the waters: he  
 entered it, having in all respects conformed  
 to the instructions of VISHNU, who, in the  
 form of a vast fish, suffered the vessel to be

“ tied with a great sea serpent, as with a cable,  
 “ to his measureless horn. When the deluge  
 “ had ceased, VISHNU slew the demon and re-  
 “ covered the *Véda's*, instructed SATYAVRATA  
 “ in divine knowledge, and appointed him the se-  
 “ venth MENU by the name of VAIVASWATA.”

LET us compare the two *Indian* accounts of the *Creation* and the *Deluge* with those delivered by MOSES. It is not made a question in this tract, Whether the first chapters of *Genesis* are to be understood in a literal, or merely in an allegorical sense? The only points before us are, Whether the creation described by the *first* MENU, which the *Bráhmans* call that of the *Lotos*, be not the same with that recorded in our Scripture; and whether the story of the seventh MENU be not one and the same with that of NOAH? I propose the questions, but affirm nothing; leaving others to settle their opinions, whether ADAM be derived from *Adam*, which in *Sanscrit* means the *first*, or MENU from NUH, the true name of the Patriarch; whether the *Sacrifice* at which GOD is believed to have descended, allude to the offering of ABEL; and, on the whole, whether the two MENU's can mean any other persons than the great Progenitor, and the Restorer of our species.

ON a supposition that VAIVASWATA, or *Sun-born*, was the NOAH of Scripture, let us proceed to the *Indian* account of his posterity,  
 which

which I extract from *The Puránart' paprecáśá*, or *The Purána's Explained*, a work lately composed in *Sanſcrit* by RA'DHA'CA'NTA SARMAN, a *Pandit* of extensive learning and great fame among the *Hindus* of this province. Before we examine the genealogies of kings which he has collected from the *Purána's*, it will be neceſſary to give a general idea of the *Avatára's*, or *Deſcents*, of the Deity: the *Hindus* believe innumerable ſuch deſcents or ſpecial interpoſitions of Providence in the affairs of mankind, but they reckon *ten* principal *Avatára's* in the current period of four ages; and all of them are deſcribed, in order as they are ſuppoſed to occur, in the following Ode of JAYADE'VA, the great Lyrick Poet of *India*.

1. " THOU recovereſt the *Véda* in the water  
 " of the Ocean of Deſtruction, placing it joy-  
 " fully in the boſom of an ark fabricated by  
 " thee, O CE'SAVA, aſſuming the body of a fiſh:  
 " Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Uni-  
 " verſe !

2. " THE earth ſtands firm on thy im-  
 " menſely broad back, which grows larger  
 " from the callus occaſioned by bearing that  
 " vaſt burthen, O CE'SAVA, aſſuming the body  
 " of a *tortoiſe*: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord  
 " of the Univerſe !

3. " THE earth, placed on the point of thy  
 " tuſk, remains fixed like the figure of a black

“ antelope on the moon, O CE'SAVA, assum-  
 “ ing the form of a *boar* : Be victorious, O  
 “ HERI, Lord of the Universe !

4. “ THE claw with a stupendous point, on  
 “ the exquisite lotos of thy lion's paw, is the  
 “ black bee that stung the body of the em-  
 “ bowelled HIRANYACA-IPU, O CE'SAVA, as-  
 “ suming the form of a *man-lion* : Be victorious,  
 “ O HERI, Lord of the Universe !

5. “ BY thy power thou beguilest BALI,  
 “ O thou miraculous dwarf, thou purifier of  
 “ men with the water (*of Gangà*) springing  
 “ from thy feet, O CE'SAVA, assuming the  
 “ form of a *dwarf* : Be victorious, O HERI,  
 “ Lord of the Universe !

6. “ THOU bathest in pure water, consisting  
 “ of the blood of *Āśvatthya's*, the world, whose  
 “ offences are removed, and who are relieved  
 “ from the pain of other births, O CE'SAVA,  
 “ assuming the form of PARAS'U-RA'MA : Be  
 “ victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe !

7. “ WITH ease to thyself, with delight to  
 “ the Genii of the eight regions, thou scat-  
 “ terest on all sides in the plain of combat the  
 “ demon with ten heads, O CE'SAVA, assuming  
 “ the form of RA'MA CHANDRA : Be victo-  
 “ rious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe !

8. “ THOU wearest on thy bright body a  
 “ mantle shining like a blue cloud, or like the  
 “ water of *Namunà* tripping towards thee  
 “ through



“ through fear of thy furrowing *plough-share*,  
 “ O CE'SAVA, assuming the form of PALA-  
 “ RA'MA : Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the  
 “ Universe !

9. “ THOU blamest (oh wonderful !) the  
 “ whole *Vēda*, when thou seest, O kind-hearted,  
 “ the slaughter of cattle prescribed for sacrifice,  
 “ O CE'SAVA, assuming the body of BUDDHA :  
 “ Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Uni-  
 “ verse !

10. “ FOR the destruction of all the impure,  
 “ thou drawest thy cimeter like a blazing co-  
 “ met (how tremendous !) O CE'SAVA, as-  
 “ suming the body of CALCI : Be victorious,  
 “ O HERI, Lord of the Universe !

THESE ten *Avatāra's* are by some arranged according to the thousands of divine years in each of the four ages, or in an arithmetical proportion from four to one, and if such an arrangement were universally received, we should be able to ascertain a very material point in the HINDU chronology ; I mean the birth of BUDDHA, concerning which the different *Pandits*, whom I have consulted, and the same *Pandits* at different times, have expressed a strange diversity of opinion. They all agree that CALCI is yet to come, and that BUDDHA was the last considerable incarnation of the Deity ; but the Astronomers at *Varānes* place him in the *third* age, and RA'DHA'CA'NT insists, that he ap-

peared after the *thousandth* year of the *fourth*: the learned and accurate author of the *Dabistân*, whose information concerning the *Hindus* is wonderfully correct, mentions an opinion of the *Pandits* with whom he had conversed, that BUDDHA began his career *ten* years before the close of the third age; and *Glôverdhana* of *Cashmir*, who had once informed me, that CRISHNA descended *two centuries* before BUDDHA, assured me lately, that the *Cashmirians* admitted an interval of *twenty-four* years (others allow only *twelve*) between those two divine persons. The best authority, after all, is the *Bhâgawat* itself, in the first chapter of which it is expressly declared, that "BUDDHA, the son of JINA, would appear at *Cikata*, for the purpose of confounding the demons, just at the beginning of the *Caliyug*." I have long been convinced, that, on these subjects, we can only reason satisfactorily from written evidence, and that our forensic rule must be invariably applied, to take the declarations of the BRAHMANs most strongly against themselves, that is, against their pretensions to antiquity; so that on the whole we may safely place BUDDHA just at the beginning of the present age: but what is the beginning of it? When this question was proposed to RA'DHA'CA'NT, he answered: "Of a period comprising more than four hundred thousand years, the first two

" on

“ or three thousand may reasonably be called the  
 “ *beginning.*” On my demanding *written* evi-  
 dence, he produced a book of some authority,  
 composed by a learned *Góswámi*, and entitled  
*Bhágawatámrita*, or, *The Nectar of the Bhága-*  
*vat*, on which it is a metrical comment; and  
 the couplet which he read from it deserves to be  
 cited : after the just mentioned account of BUDDHA  
 in the text, the commentator says,

“ *Aśau vyactah calérabdasahasradwítayè gatè,*  
 “ *Murtih patálavernā'fya dwibhujā chichurōjj'hítā.*

“ HE *became* visible, the-thousand-and-se-  
 “ *cond-year-of-the-Cali-age* being past; his  
 “ *body of-a-colour-between-white-and-ruddy,*  
 “ *with-two-arms, without-hair on his head.*”

*Cicata*, named in the text as the birth-place  
 of BUDDHA, the *Góswámi* supposes to have been  
*Dhermáránya*, a wood near *Gayá*, where a co-  
 lossal image of that ancient Deity still remains :  
 it seemed to me of black stone ; but, as I saw  
 it by torch-light, I cannot be positive as to its  
 colour, which may, indeed, have been changed  
 by time.

THE *Bráhmans* universally speak of the  
*Bauddhas* with all the malignity of an into-  
 lerant spirit ; yet the most orthodox among  
 them consider BUDDHA himself as an incarna-  
 tion of VISHNU : this is a contradiction hard to  
 be reconciled, unless we cut the knot instead of

varying it, by supposing with GIORGI, that there were *two* BUDDHAS, the younger of whom established the new religion, which gave so great offence in *India*, and was introduced into *China* in the first century of our era. The *Casimirian*, before mentioned, asserted this fact, without being led to it by any question that implied it; and we may have reason to suppose, that *Buddha* is in truth only a general word for a *Philosopher*. The author of a celebrated *Sansevit* Dictionary, entitled from his name *Amaracōsha*, who was himself a *Bauddha*, and flourished in the first century before CHRIST, begins his vocabulary with nine words that signify *Heaven*, and proceeds to those which mean a *Deity in general*; after which come different *classes* of *Gods*, *Demi-gods*, and *Demons*, all by *generic* names; and they are followed by two very remarkable heads: first, (not the *general names* of BUDDHA, but) the names of a *Buddha-in-general*, of which he gives us eighteen, such as *Muni*, *Sāstri*, *Munindra*, *Vraṣyaca*, *Samantabhadra*, *Dharmarāja*, *Sugata*, and the like, most of them significative of *excellence*, *wisdom*, *virtue*, and *sanctity*; secondly, the names of a *particular Buddha-Muni*-who-descended-in-the-family-of-SA'CYA (those are the very words of the original), and his titles are, *Sācyamuni*, *Sācyasinha*,



*śubha*, *Servārt'hasiddha*, *Saundhōdani*, *Gautama*, *Arcabandhu*, or *Kinsman of the Sun*, and *Māyādevīputa*, or *Child of Māyā*: thence the author passes to the different epithets of particular *Hindu* Deities. When I pointed out this curious passage to RA'DHA'CA'NT, he contended, that the first eighteen names were *general* epithets, and the following seven, *proper names*, or *patronymicks* of one and the same person; but RA'MA-LO'CHAN, my own teacher, who, though not a *Brāhman*, is an excellent scholar and a very sensible unprejudiced man, assured me, that *Buddha* was a *generick* word, like *Dēva*, and that the learned author, having exhibited the names of a *Dēvatā* in general, proceeded to those of a *Buddha* in general, before he came to particulars: he added, that *Buddha* might mean a *Sage* or a *Philosopher*, though *Buddha* was the word commonly used for a mere *wise man* without supernatural powers.

It seems highly probable, on the whole, that the BUDDHA, whom JAYADE'VA celebrates in his Hymn, was the *Sācyasūba*, or *Lion of SA'CYA*, who, though he forbade the sacrifices of cattle, which the *Veda's* enjoin, was believed to be VISHNU himself in a human form, and that another *Buddha*, one perhaps of his followers in a later age, assuming his name and character, attempted to overset the whole system

system of the *Bráhmans*, and was the cause of that persecution, from which the *Bauddhas* are known to have fled into very distant regions. May we not reconcile th singular difference of opinion among the *Hindus* as to the time of BUDDHA's appearance, by supposing that they have confounded the *Two Buddha's*, the first of whom was born a few years before the close of the last age, and the second, when above a thousand years of the present age had elapsed? We know, from better authorities, and with as much certainty as can justly be expected on so doubtful a subject, the real time, compared with our own era, when the ancient BUDDHA began to distinguish himself; and it is for this reason principally, that I have dwelled with minute anxiety on the subject of the last *Avatár*.

THE *Bráhmans*, who assisted ABU'LFAZL in his curious but superficial account of his master's empire, informed him, if the figures in the *Ayini Acbari* be correctly written, that a period of 2962 years had elapsed from the birth of BUDDHA to the 40th year of ACBAR's reign, which computation will place his birth in the 1366th year before that of Our Saviour; but when the *Chinese* government admitted a new religion from *India* in the first century of our era, they made particular inquiries concerning the age of the old *India* BUDDHA, whose birth,  
according

according to COUPLET, they place in the 41st year of their 28th cycle, or 1036 years before CHRIST, and they call him, says he, FOE the son of MOYE or MA'YA'; but M. DE GUIGNES, on the authority of four *Chinese* Historians, asserts, that FO was born about the year before CHRIST 1027, in the kingdom of *Cashmir*: GIORGI, or rather CASSIANO, from whose papers his work was compiled, assures us, that, by the calculation of the *Tibetians*, he appeared only 959 years before the *Christian* epoch; and M. BAILLY, with some hesitation, places him 1031 years before it, but inclines to think him far more ancient, confounding him, as I have done in a former tract, with the *first* BUDHA, or MERCURY, whom the *Goths* called WODEN, and of whom I shall presently take particular notice. Now, whether we assume the medium of the four last mentioned dates, or implicitly rely on the authorities quoted by DE GUIGNES, we may conclude, that BUDHA was first distinguished in this country *about a thousand* years before the beginning of our era; and whoever, in so early an age, expects a certain epoch unqualified with *about* or *nearly*, will be greatly disappointed. Hence it is clear, that, whether the fourth age of the *Hindus* began about *one* thousand years before CHRIST, according to GOVERDHAN's account of BUDHA's birth, or *two* thousand according to that

that of RA'DHA'CA'NT, the common opinion, that 4888 years of it are now elapsed, is erroneous. And here, for the present, we leave BUDDHA, with an intention of returning to him in due time; observing only, that if the learned *Indians* differ so widely in their accounts of the age when their ninth *Avatâr* appeared in their country, we may be assured, that they have no certain chronology before him, and may suspect the certainty of all the relations concerning even *his* appearance.

THE received Chronology of the *Hindus* begins with an absurdity so monstrous, as to overthrow the whole system; for, having established their period of *seventy-one divine ages* as the reign of each *Menu*, yet thinking it incongruous to place a holy personage in times of *impurity*, they insist, that the *Menu* reigns only in every *golden age*, and disappears in the *three human ages* that follow it, continuing to dive and emerge like a water-fowl, till the close of his *Manwantara*. The learned author of the *Puranî'bhâprasâsa*, which I will now follow step by step, mentioned this ridiculous opinion with a serious face; but as he has not inserted it in his work, we may take his account of the seventh *Menu* according to its obvious and rational meaning, and suppose, that VAIVASWATA, the son of SU'RYA, the son of CASYAPA, or *Uranus* the son of MAR'ICHI, or *Light*, the son of BRAHMA, which is clearly an alle-



allegorical pedigree, reigned in the last golden age, or, according to the *Hindus*, three million eight hundred and ninety-two thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight years ago. But they contend, that he actually reigned on earth *one million seven hundred and twenty-eight thousand years* of mortals, or *four thousand eight hundred years* of the Gods; and this opinion is another monster so repugnant to the course of nature and to human reason, that it must be rejected as wholly fabulous, and taken as a proof, that the *Indians* know nothing of their *Sunborn MENU*, but his name and the principal event of his life; I mean the *universal deluge*, of which the *three first Avatars* are merely allegorical representations, with a mixture, especially in the *second*, of astronomical mythology.

FROM this MENU the whole race of men is believed to have descended; for the seven *Rishi's*, who were preserved with him in the ark, are not mentioned as fathers of human families; but since his daughter ILA' was married, as the *Indians* tell us, to the first BUDHA, or *Mercury*, the son of CHANDRA, or the *Moon*, a male Deity, whose father was ATRI, son of BRAHMA' (where again we meet with an allegory purely astronomical or poetical), his posterity are divided into two great branches, called the *Children of the Sun* from his own supposed father, and the *Children of the Moon* from the parent of his daughter's husband:

band : the lineal male descendants in both these families are supposed to have reigned in the cities of *Ayódhya*, or *Audh*, and *Pratish'hana*, or *Vittra*, respectively, till the *thousandth year of the present age*; and the names of all the princes in both lines having been diligently collected by RA'DHA'CA'NT from several *Purána's*, I exhibit them in two columns arranged by myself with great attention.

## S E C O N D   A G E .

## CHILDREN OF THE

## S U N .

## M O O N .

|     |              |             |     |
|-----|--------------|-------------|-----|
|     | ICSHWA'CU,   | BUDHA,      |     |
|     | Vicuc'shi,   | Pururavas,  |     |
|     | Cucutst'ha,  | Ayush,      |     |
|     | Anénas,      | Nahusha,    |     |
| 5.  | Prit'bu,     | Yayáti,     | 5.  |
|     | Viswagandhi, | Puru,       |     |
|     | Chandra,     | Janaméjaya, |     |
|     | Yuvanás'wa,  | Prachinwat, |     |
|     | Sráva,       | Pravíra,    |     |
| 10. | Vrihadas'wa, | Menas'yu,   | 10. |
|     | Dhundhumára, | Chárupada,  |     |
|     | Drid'hás'wa, | Sudyu,      |     |
|     | Heryas'wa,   | Bahugava,   |     |
|     | Nicumbha,    | Sanyáti,    |     |
| 15. | Crisás'wa,   | Ahanyáti,   | 15. |
|     | Sénajit,     | Raudrás'wa, |     |
|     | Yuvanás'wa,  | Ritéyush,   |     |
|     |              | Mándhátri,  |     |

| <i>S U N.</i>       | <i>M O O N.</i>       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Mándhatri,          | Rantináva,            |
| Purucutsa,          | Sumati,               |
| 20. Trafadasyu,     | Aiti, 20.             |
| Anaranya,           | <i>Dushimanta.</i>    |
| Heryaswa,           | <i>Bharata,*</i>      |
| Praruna,            | (Vitat'ha,            |
| Trivindhana,        | Manyu,                |
| 25. Satyavrata,     | Vrihatsfhétra, 25.    |
| Trifancu,           | Hastin,               |
| Harischandra,       | Ajamid'ha,            |
| Róhita,             | Ricsha,               |
| Harita,             | Samwarana,            |
| 30. Champa,         | <i>Curu,</i> 30.      |
| Sudéva,             | <i>Jabnu,</i>         |
| Vijaya,             | Surat'ha,             |
| Bharuca,            | Vidúrat'ha,           |
| Vrica,              | Sárvabhauma,          |
| 35. Báhuca,         | Jayatféna, 35.        |
| <i>Sagara,</i>      | Rád'hica,             |
| Afamanjas,          | Ayutáyush,            |
| Ansumat,            | Aerodhana,            |
| <i>Bhagirat'ha,</i> | Dévátit'hi,           |
| 40. Sruta,          | Ricsha, 40.           |
| Nábha,              | <i>Dilipa,</i>        |
| Sindhudwípa,        | Pratípa,              |
| Ayutáyush,          | Sántanu,              |
| Ritaperna,          | <i>Vichitravírya,</i> |
| 45. Saudása,        | Pándu, 45.            |
| Afmaca,             | <i>Yudhisht'hir),</i> |
|                     | Múlaca,               |

## S U N.

Múlaca,  
 Dasarat'ha,  
 Aidabidi,

50. Viswafaha,  
 C'hâtw'anga,  
 Dîrghabâhu,  
 Raghu,  
 Aja,

55. Dasarat'ha,  
 RA'MA.

It is agreed among all the *Pandits* that RA'MA, their *seventh* incarnate divinity, appeared as king of *Ayodhyâ* in the *interval* between the *silver* and the *brazen* ages; and, if we suppose him to have begun his reign at the very beginning of that interval, still *three thousand three hundred* years of the Gods, or a *million one hundred and eighty-eight thousand* lunar years of mortals will remain in the *silver* age, during which the *fifty-five* princes between VAIVASWATA and RA'MA must have governed the world; but, reckoning *thirty* years for a generation, which is rather too much for a long succession of *eldest* sons, as they are said to have been, we cannot, by the course of nature, extend the *second* age of the *Hindus* beyond *sixteen hundred and fifty* solar years: if we suppose them not to have been *eldest* sons, and even to have lived longer than modern princes

in



in a dissolute age, we shall find only a period of *two thousand years* ; and if we remove the difficulty by admitting miracles, we must cease to reason, and may as well believe at once whatever the *Bráhmans* chuse to tell us.

IN the *Lunar* pedigree we meet with another absurdity equally fatal to the credit of the *Hindu* system : as far as the twenty-second degree of descent from VAIVASWATA, the synchronism of the two families appears tolerably regular, except that the children of the Moon were not all *eldest* sons ; for king YAYÁ'TI appointed the youngest of his five sons to succeed him in *India*, and allotted inferior kingdoms to the other four, who had offended him ; part of the *Doeshin* or the *South* to YADU, the ancestor of CRISHNA ; the North, to ANU ; the East, to DRUHYA ; and the West, to TURVASU, from whom the *Pandits* believe, or pretend to believe, in compliment to our nation, that we are descended. But of the subsequent degrees in the lunar line they know so little, that, unable to supply a considerable interval between BHARAT and VITAT'HA, whom they call his son and successor, they are under a necessity of asserting, that the great ancestor of YUDHISHTH'HIR, actually reigned *seven and twenty thousand years* : a fable of the same class with that of his wonderful birth, which is the subject of a beautiful *Indian* drama : now, if we suppose his life

to have lasted no longer than that of other mortals, and admit VITAT'HA and the rest to have been his regular successors, we shall fall into another absurdity ; for then, if the generations in both lines were nearly equal, as they would naturally have been, we shall find YUDHISHT'HIR, who reigned confessedly at the close of the *bræzen* age, nine generations older than RA'MA, before whose birth the *silver* age is allowed to have ended. After the name of BHARAT, therefore, I have set an asterisk to denote a considerable chasm in the *Indian* History, and have inserted between brackets, as out of their places, his *twenty-four* successors, who reigned, if at all, in the following age immediately before the war of the *Mahābhārat*. The fourth *Avatār*, which is placed in the interval between the *first* and *second* ages, and the fifth, which soon followed it, appear to be moral fables grounded on historical facts : the *fourth* was the punishment of an impious monarch by the Deity himself *bursting from a marble column* in the shape of a *lion* ; and the fifth was the humiliation of an arrogant Prince, by so contemptible an agent as a mendicant *dwarf*. After these, and immediately before BUDDHA, come three great warriors all named RA'MA ; but it may justly be made a question, whether they are not three representations of one person, or three different ways of relating the same history ; the first and  
second

second RA'MAS are said to have been contemporary ; but whether all or any of them mean RAMA the son of CU'SH, I leave others to determine. The mother of the second RAMA was named CAU'SHALYA', which is a derivative of CUSHALA, and though his father be distinguished by the title or epithet of DA'SARAT'HA, signifying, that *his war-chariot bore him to all quarters of the world*, yet the name of CUSH, as the *Cashmirians* pronounce it, is preserved entire in that of his son and successor, and shadowed in that of his ancestor VIEUCSHI ; nor can a just objection be made to this opinion from the nasal *Arabian* vowel in the word *Rá-mah* mentioned by MOSES, since the very word *Arab* begins with the same letter which the *Greeks* and *Indians* could not pronounce, and they were obliged, therefore, to express it by the vowel which most resembled it. On this question, however, I assert nothing ; nor on another, which might be proposed : " Whether the *fourth* and *fifth Avatàrs* be not allegorical stories of the two presumptuous monarchs, NIMROD and BELUS ? " The hypothesis, that government was first established, laws enacted, and agriculture encouraged in *India* by RAMA, about *three thousand eight hundred years* ago, agrees with the received account of NOAH's death, and the previous settlement of his immediate descendants.

## THIRD AGE.

## CHILDREN OF THE

## SUN.

## MOON.

Cusba,

Atit'hi,

Nishadha,

Nabhas,

5. Pun'darica,

Cshémadhanwas,

Dévánica,

Ahin'agu,

Páripátra,

10. Ranach'hala,

Vajranábha,

Arca,

Sugana,

Vidhriti,

15. Hiranyanábha,

Pushya,

Dhruvasandhi,

Suderfana,

Agniverna,

20. Síghra,

Maru, supposed to be

still alive,

Prasufruta,

Sandhi,

Amerfana,

35. Mahaswat,

Vitat'ha,

Manyu,

Vrihatschétra,

Hastin,

Ajamid'ha,

Ricsha,

Samwarana,

Curu,

Jabnu,

Surat'ha,

Vidúrat'ha,

Sárvabhauma,

Jayatféna,

Rádhica,

Ayutáyush,

Acródhana,

Dévatit'hi,

Ricsha,

Dilípa,

Pratípa,

Viswabáhu,

5.

10.

15.

20.



## SUN.

Vishvabhāhu,

Prasenajit,

Tashtaca,

Vribadbala,

30. Vrihadrama, Y. B. C. }

3100.

## MOON.

Santanu,

Vichitravīya,

Pāndu,

Yudhisht'ira,

} Parīkshit. 25

HERE we have only *nine-and-twenty* Princes of the Solar line between RA'MA and VRIHAD-RANA exclusively; and their reigns, during the whole *brazen* age, are supposed to have lasted near *eight hundred and sixty-four thousand* years, a supposition evidently against nature; the uniform course of which allows only a period of *eight hundred and seventy*, or at the very utmost, of *a thousand* years for *twenty-nine* generations. PARĪCSHIT, the great nephew and successor of YUDHISHT'HIR, who had recovered the throne from DURYO'DHAN, is allowed without controversy to have reigned in the interval between the *brazen* and *earthen* ages, and to have died at the setting-in of the *Caliyug*; so that if the *Pandits* of *Cashmir* and *Varānes* have made a right calculation of BUDDHA's appearance, the present, or *fourth*, age must have begun about *a thousand* years before the birth of CHRIST, and consequently the reign of ICISHWA'CU could not have been earlier than *four thousand* years before that great epoch; and even that date will perhaps appear, when

it shall be strictly examined, to be near *two thousand* years earlier than the truth. I cannot leave the third *Indian* age, in which the virtues and vices of mankind are said to have been equal, without observing, that even the close of it is manifestly fabulous and poetical, with hardly more *appearance* of historical truth than the tale of *Troy*, or of the *Argonauts*; for YUDHISHT'HIR, it seems, was the son of DHERMA, the *Genius of Justice*; BHI'MA of PAVAN, or the *God of Wind*; ARJUN of INDRA, or the *Firmament*: NACUL and SAHADE'VA, of the two CUMA'RS, the CASTOR and POLLUX of *India*; and BHI'SHMA, their reputed great uncle, was the child of GANGA', or the GANGES, by SA'NTANU, whose brother DE'VA'PI is supposed to be still alive in the city of *Calapa*; all which fictions may be charming embellishments of an heroick poem, but are just as absurd in civil history, as the descent of two royal families from the Sun and the Moon.

## FOURTH AGE.

## CHILDREN OF THE

## SUN.

Urucriya,  
Vatsavridha,  
Pratiyyóma,

## MOON.

*Janaméjaya,*  
*Satánica,*  
*Sahafránica,*  
Bhānu,

## SUN.

- Bhānu,  
 5. Dēvāca,  
 Sahadēva,  
 Vīra,  
 Vrihadāswa,  
 Bhānumat,  
 10. Praticāswa,  
 Supratīca,  
 Marudēva,  
 Sunacshatra,  
 Pushtara,  
 15. Antarcsha,  
 Sutapas,  
 Amitrajit,  
 Vrihadrāja,  
 Barhi,  
 20. Critanjaya,  
 Rananjaya,  
 Sanjaya,  
 Slōcya,  
 Suddhōda,  
 25. Lāngalāda,  
 Prasēnajit,  
 Cshudraca,  
 Sumitra, Y. B. C. 2100. Cshēmāca.

## MOON.

- Aswamēdhaja,  
 Asīmacrīshna, 5.  
 Némichācra,  
 Upta,  
 Chitrarat'ha,  
 Suchirat'ha,  
 Dhritimat, 10.  
 Sushēna,  
 Sunit'ha,  
 Nrichacshuh,  
 Suc'hinala,  
 Pariplava, 15.  
 Sunaya,  
 Médhāvin,  
 Nripanjaya,  
 Derva,  
 Timi, 20.  
 Vrihadrat'ha,  
 Sudāsa,  
 Satānīca,  
 Durmadana,  
 Rahīnara, 25.  
 Dandapāni,  
 Nimi,

IN both families, we see *thirty* generations  
 are reckoned from YUDHISHT'HIR, and from

VRIHADBALA his contemporary (who was killed, in the war of *Bhârat*, by ABHIMANYU, son of ARJUN, and father of PARICSHIT), to the time when the *Solar* and *Lunar* dynasties are believed to have become extinct in the present divine age; and for these generations the *Hindus* allot a period of *one thousand* years only, or a *hundred* years for *three* generations; which calculation, though probably too large, is yet moderate enough, compared with their absurd accounts of the preceding ages: but they reckon exactly the same number of years for *twenty* generations only in the family of JARA'SANDHA, whose son was contemporary with YUDHISHT'HIR, and founded a new dynasty of Princes in *Magadha*, or *Babâr*; and this exact coincidence of the time, in which the three races are supposed to have been extinct, has the appearance of an artificial chronology, formed rather from imagination than from historical evidence; especially as twenty kings, in an age comparatively modern, could not have reigned a thousand years.

I, NEVERTHELESS, exhibit the list of them as a curiosity; but am far from being convinced, that all of them ever existed: that, if they did exist, they could not have reigned more than *seven hundred* years, I am fully persuaded by the course of nature and the concurrent opinion of mankind.



## KINGS OF MAGADHA.

|               |              |     |
|---------------|--------------|-----|
| Sahadéva,     | Suchi,       |     |
| Márijari,     | Cshéma,      |     |
| Srutafravas,  | Suvrata,     |     |
| Ayutáyush,    | Dhermafútra, |     |
| 5. Niramitra, | Srama,       | 15. |
| Sunacshatra,  | Drid'haséna, |     |
| Vrihetséna,   | Sumati,      |     |
| Carmajit,     | Subala,      |     |
| Srutanjaya,   | Sunita,      |     |
| 10. Vipra,    | Satyajit,    | 20. |

PURANJAYA, son of the twentieth king, was put to death by his minister SUNACA, who placed his own son PRADYO'TA on the throne of his master; and this revolution constitutes an epoch of the highest importance in our present inquiry; first, because it happened according to the *Bhágawatámrita*, two years exactly before BUDDHA's appearance in the same kingdom; next, because it is believed by the *Hindus* to have taken place *three thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight* years ago, or *two thousand one hundred* years before CHRIST; and, lastly, because a regular chronology, according to the number of years in each dynasty, has been established from the accession of PRADYO'TA to the subversion of the genuine *Hindu* government; and that chronology I will

now

now lay before you, after observing only, that RA'DHA'CA'NT himself says nothing of BUDDHA in this part of his work, though he particularly mentions the two preceding *Avatāra's* in their proper places.

## KINGS OF MAGADHA.

|                                      | Y. B. C. |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Pradyōta,                            | 2100     |
| Pālaca,                              |          |
| Vifāc'hayūpa,                        |          |
| Rājaca,                              |          |
| Nandiverdhana, 5 reigns = 138 years, |          |
| Sifunāga,                            | 1962     |
| Cācaverna,                           |          |
| Cshēmadherman,                       |          |
| Cshétrajnya,                         |          |
| Vidhisāra, 5,                        |          |
| Ajātasatru,                          |          |
| Dārbhaca,                            |          |
| Ajaya,                               |          |
| Nandiverdhana,                       |          |
| Mahānandi, 10 r = 360 y.             |          |

|        |      |
|--------|------|
| NANDA, | 1602 |
|--------|------|

THIS prince, of whom frequent mention is made in the *Sanscrit* books, is said to have been murdered, after a reign of a *hundred years*, by a very learned and ingenious, but passionate and

and vindictive, *Bráhma*n, whose name was CHA'NACYA, and who raised to the throne a man of the *Maurya* race, named CHANDRA-GUPTA : by the death of NANDA, and his sons, the *Cshatriya* family of PRADYO'TA became extinct.

## MAURYA KINGS.

|                | Y. B. C.     |
|----------------|--------------|
| Chandragupta,  | 1502         |
| Várisára,      |              |
| Asócaverdhana, |              |
| Suyasas,       |              |
| Defarat'ha,    | 5.           |
| Sangata,       |              |
| Sálifúca,      |              |
| Sómasarman,    |              |
| Satadhanwas,   |              |
| Vrihadrat'ha,  | 10 r = 1377. |

ON the death of the tenth *Maurya* king, his place was assumed by his Commander in Chief, PUSHPAMITRA, of the *Sunga* nation or family.

## SUNGA KINGS.

|              | Y. B. C. |
|--------------|----------|
| Pushpamitra, | 1365     |
| Agnimitra,   |          |
| Sujyészta,   |          |

## SUNDA KINGS.

Y. B. C.

Sujoyésh'tha,

1365

Vasumitra,

Abhadra, 5.

Pulinda,

Ghós'ha,

Vajramitra,

Bhágavata,

Dévabhúti, 10 r = 112 y.

THE last prince was killed by his minister VASUDE'VA, of the *Canna* race, who usurped the throne of *Magadha*.

## CANNA KINGS.

Y. B. C.

Vasudéva,

1253

Bhúmitra,

Náráyana,

Susarman, 4 r = 345 y.

A *Súdra*, of the *Andhra* family, having murdered his master SUSARMAN, and seized the government, founded a new dynasty of

## ANDHRA KINGS.

Y. B. C.

Balin,

908

Crishna,

Srisántacarna,



## ANDHRA KINGS.

|                | Y. B. C.      |
|----------------|---------------|
| Sriśāntacarna, | 908           |
| Paurṇamāsa,    |               |
| Lambódara,     | 5.            |
| Vivilaca,      |               |
| Méghaswāta,    |               |
| Vātamāna,      |               |
| Talaca,        |               |
| Sivaswāti,     | 10.           |
| Purīshabhēru,  |               |
| Sunandana,     |               |
| Chacóraca,     |               |
| Bātaca,        |               |
| Gómatin,       | 15.           |
| Purīmat,       |               |
| Mēdasīras,     |               |
| Siraseand'ha,  |               |
| Yajnyasri,     |               |
| Vijaya,        | 20.           |
| Chandrabiḥja,  | 21 r = 456 y. |

AFTER the death of CHANDRABIJA, which happened, according to the *Hindus*, 396 years before VICRAMA'DITYA, or 452 B. C. we hear no more of *Magadha* as an independent kingdom; but RA'DHA'CA'NT has exhibited the names of *seven* dynasties, in which *seventy-six* princes are said to have reigned *one thousand three*

three hundred and ninety-nine years in *Avabbriti*, a town of the *Dacshin*, or *South*, which we commonly call *Decan*: the names of the seven dynasties, or of the families who established them, are, *Abhira*, *Gardabhin*, *Canca*, *Tavana*, *Turushcara*, *Bhurunda*, *Maula*; of which the *Tavana*'s are by some, not generally, supposed to have been *Ionians*, or *Greeks*, but the *Turushcara*'s and *Maula*'s are universally believed to have been *Turcs* and *Moguls*; yet RA'DHA'CA'NT adds: "when the *Maula* race was extinct, five Princes, named *Bhinanda*, *Bangira*, *Sifunandi*, *Yasinandi*, and *Praviraca*, reigned an hundred and six years (or till the year 1053) in the city of *Cilacila*," which, he tells me, he understands to be in the country of the *Maharashtra*'s, or *Mahrata*'s: and here ends his *Indian Chronology*; for "after *PRA-VIRACA*," says he, "this Empire was divided among *Mlech'bas*, or *Infidels*."

THIS account of the *seven modern dynasties* appears very doubtful in itself, and has no relation to our present enquiry; for their dominion seems confined to the *Decan*, without extending to *Magadha*; nor have we any reason to believe, that a race of *Grecian* Princes ever established a kingdom in either of those countries; as to the *Moguls*, their dynasty still subsists, at least nominally; unless that of  
Chengiz

*Cbengiz* be meant, and his successors could not have reigned in any part of *India* for the period of *three hundred years*, which is assigned to the *Maula's*; nor is it probable, that the word *Turc*, which an *Indian* could have easily pronounced and clearly expressed in the *Nágarí* letters, should have been corrupted into *Turushcara*. On the whole, we may safely close the most authentick system of *Hindu* Chronology, that I have yet been able to procure, with the death of *CHANDRABIJA*. Should any farther information be attainable, we shall, perhaps, in due time attain it, either from books or inscriptions in the *Sanserit* language; but from the materials with which we are at present supplied, we may establish as indubitable the two following propositions; that the *three first* ages of the *Hindus* are chiefly *mythological*, whether their mythology was founded on the dark enigmas of their astronomers or on the heroick fictions of their poets; and, that the *fourth*, or *historical*, age cannot be carried farther back than about two thousand years before *CHRIST*. Even in the history of the present age, the generations of men and the reigns of kings are extended beyond the course of nature, and beyond the average resulting from the accounts of the *Bráhmans* themselves; for they assign to *an hundred and forty-two* modern reigns

reigns a period of *three thousand one hundred and fifty-three* years, or about *twenty-two* years to a reign, one with another; yet they represent only four *Canna* Princes on the throne of *Magadha* for a period of *three hundred and forty-five* years; now it is even more improbable, that four successive kings should have reigned *eighty-six* years and *three months* each, than that *NANDA* should have been king an *hundred* years, and murdered at last. Neither account can be credited; but, that we may allow the highest probable antiquity to the *Hindu* government, let us grant, that *three generations* of men were equal on an average to an *hundred* years, and that *Indian* Princes have reigned, one with another, *two and twenty*; then reckoning thirty generations from *ARJUN*, the brother of *YUDHISHT'HIRA*, to the extinction of his race, and taking the *Chinese* account of *BUDDHA*'s birth from *M. DE GUIGNES*, as the most authentic medium between *ABU'LFAZE* and the *Tibetians*, we may arrange the corrected *Hindu* Chronology according to the following table, supplying the word *about* or *nearly* (since perfect accuracy cannot be attained and ought not to be required), before every date.

|                                  | Y. B. C. |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Abhimanyu, son of <i>ARJUN</i> , | 2029     |
| Pradyōta, — — —                  | 1029     |
| BUDDHA,                          |          |



|                                  | Y. B. C. |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| BUDDHA, ———                      | 1027     |
| NANDA, — — —                     | 699      |
| Balin, — — —                     | 149      |
| VICRAMA'DITYA ———                | 56       |
| DE'VAPA'LA, <i>king of Gaur,</i> | 23       |

IF we take the date of BUDDHA's appearance from ABU'LF AZL, we must place ABHIMANYU 2368 years before CHRIST, unless we calculate from the twenty kings of *Magadha*, and allow *seven hundred years*, instead of *a thousand*, between ARJUN and PRADYO'TA, which will bring us again very nearly to the date exhibited in the table; and, perhaps, we can hardly approach nearer to the truth. As to Rājā NANDA, if he really sat on the throne a whole century, we must bring down the *Andhra* dynasty to the age of VICRAMA'DITYA, who with his feudatories had probably obtained so much power during the reign of those princes, that they had little more than a nominal sovereignty, which ended with CHANDRAB'JA, in the *third or fourth century* of the *Christian* era; having, no doubt, been long reduced to insignificance by the kings of *Gaur*, descended from GO'PA'LA. But, if the author of the *Dabistân* be warranted in fixing the birth of BUDDHA *ten years* before the *Caliyug*, we must thus correct the Chronological Table:

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Y | BUDDHA, |
|---|---------|

|  |   | Y. B. C.  |
|--|---|-----------|
| BUDDHA,  | — | 1027      |
| Paricshit,                                       | — | 1017      |
| Pradyóta, (reckoning 20 or }<br>30 generations,) |   | 317 or 17 |
|  |   | Y. A. C.  |
| Nanda,   | — | 13 or 313 |

This correction would oblige us to place VICRAMA'DITYA before NANDA, to whom, as all the *Pandits* agree, he was long posterior; and, if this be an historical fact, it seems to confirm the *Bhagawatāmrita*, which fixes the beginning of the *Caliyug* about a thousand years before BUDDHA: besides that, BALIN would then be brought down at least to the sixth and CHANDRABI'JA to the tenth century after CHRIST, without leaving room for the subsequent dynasties, if they reigned successively.

THUS have we given a sketch of *Indian History* through the longest period fairly assignable to it, and have traced the foundation of the *Indian* empire above three thousand eight hundred years from the present time; but, on a subject in itself so obscure, and so much clouded by the fictions of the *Bráhmans*, who, to aggrandize themselves, have designedly raised their antiquity beyond the truth, we must be satisfied with probable conjecture and just reasoning

soning from the best attainable data; nor can we hope for a system of *Indian Chronology* to which no objection can be made, unless the astronomical books in *Sanfrit* shall clearly ascertain the places of the colures in some precise years of the historical age; not by loose traditions, like that of a coarse observation by CHIRON, who possibly never existed, for "he lived," says NEWTON, in the golden age," which must long have preceded the *Argonautick* expedition) but by such evidence as our own astronomers and scholars shall allow to be unexceptionable.

## A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE,

according to one of the *HYPOTHESES* intimated  
in the preceding *Tract*.

| CHRISTIAN<br>and MUSELMAN. | HINDU.                 | Years from 1788<br>of our era. |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ADAM,                      | MENU I. Age I.         | 5794                           |
| NOAH,                      | MENU II.               | 4737                           |
| Deluge,                    |                        | 4138                           |
| Nimrod,                    | Hiranyacasipu. Age II. | 4006                           |
| Bel,                       | Bali,                  | 3892                           |
| RAMA,                      | RAMA. Age III.         | 3817                           |
| Noah's death,              |                        | 3787                           |
|                            | Pradyōta,              | 2817                           |
|                            | BUDDHA. Age IV.        | 2815                           |
|                            | Nanda,                 | 2487                           |
|                            | Balin,                 | 1937                           |
|                            | Vacramāditya,          | 1844                           |
|                            | Dévapāla,              | 1811                           |
| CHRIST,                    |                        | 1787                           |
|                            | Nārāyanpāla,           | 1721                           |
|                            | Sacā,                  | 1709                           |
| Walid,                     |                        | 1080                           |
| Mahmūd,                    |                        | 786                            |
| Chengiz,                   |                        | 548                            |
| Taimūr,                    |                        | 391                            |
| Babur,                     |                        | 276                            |
| Nādirshāh,                 |                        | 49                             |



## DISSERTATION X.

A

## SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

## ESSAY ON INDIAN CHRONOLOGY.

OUR ingenious associate Mr. SAMUEL DAVIS, whom I name with respect and applause, and who will soon, I trust, convince M. BAILLY, that it is very possible for an *European* to translate and explain the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, favoured me lately with a copy, taken by his *Pandit*, of the original passage mentioned in his paper on the Astronomical Computations of the *Hindus*, concerning the places of the colures in the time of VAKA'HA, compared with their position in the age of a certain *Muni*, or ancient *Indian* philosopher; and the passage appears to afford evidence of two actual observations, which will ascertain the chronology of the *Hindus*, if not by rigorous demonstration, at least by a near approach to it.

THE copy of the *Vārāhīsanhitā*, from which the three pages, received by me, had been transcribed, is unhappily so incorrect (if the tran-

script itself was not hastily made) that every line of it must be disfigured by some gross error; and my *Pandit*, who examined the passage carefully at his own house, gave it up as inexplicable; so that, if I had not studied the system of *Sanscrit* prosody, I should have laid it aside in despair: but though it was written as prose, without any sort of distinction or punctuation, yet, when I read it aloud, my ear caught in some sentences the cadence of verse, and of a particular metre, called *A'rya*, which is regulated (not by the *number* of syllables, like other *Indian* measures, but) by the proportion of *times*, or *syllabick moments*, in the four divisions, of which every stanza consists. By numbering those moments and fixing their proportion, I was enabled to restore the text of *VARA'HA*, with the perfect assent of the learned *Brâhmen* who attends me; and, with his assistance, I also corrected the comment written by *BHATTO'TPALA*, who, it seems, was a son of the author, together with three curious passages which are cited in it. Another *Pandit* afterwards brought me a copy of the whole original work, which confirmed my conjectural emendations, except in two immaterial syllables, and except, that the first of the six couplets in the text is quoted in the commentary from a different work entitled *Panchasiddhantikâ*: five of them were composed by *VARA'HA* himself,

self, and the third chapter of his treatise begins with them.

BEFORE I produce the original verses, it may be useful to give you an idea of the *Arya* measure, which will appear more distinctly in Latin than in any modern language of *Europe* :

Tigridas, apros, thoas, tyrannos, pessima monstra, venemur :  
Dic hinnulus, dic lepus male quid egerint graminivori.

The couplet might be so arranged, as to begin and end with the cadence of an hexameter and pentameter, six *moments* being interposed in the middle of the long, and seven in that of the short, hemistich :

Thoas, apros, tigridas nos venemur, pejoresque tyrannos :  
Dic tibi cerva, lepus tibi dic mala quid egerit herbivorus.

Since the *Arya* measure, however, may be almost infinitely varied, the couplet would have a form completely *Roman*, if the proportion of *syllabick instants*, in the long and short verses, were *twenty-four to twenty*, instead of *thirty to twenty-seven* :

Venor apros tigridasque, et, pessima monstra, tyrannos :  
Cerva mali quid agunt herbivorusque lepus ?

I now exhibit the five stanzas of VARA'HA in *European* characters.

Aśśhārdhāddacchinamuttaramayanān ravērdhanisht'hādyan  
Nūnā cadāchidāsīdyēnoctān pūrva sastrēṣhu.  
Sāmpratamayānān savituh carcātacādyan mrigāditaśchānyat :  
Uctābhāve vicritih pratyacśhapericśhanair vyaśtīh.  
Dūraśt'hachihnavēdyādudaye'stamaye'pivā sahaśrānśūh,

Ch'hâyâpravéśanirgamachihnaivâ mandalê mahati.  
 Aprâpya macaramarê vinivrittô hanti śâparâṇ yâmyân,  
 Carcâtacannâṇprâptô vinivrittâśchôttarân saindrin.  
 Uttaramayanamatîtya vyâvrittah cihêmâṇâṇyâ vridhicarah,  
 Pracirikt'haśchâpyévan vieritigatir bhayacriduśhmanâh.

OF the five couplets thus exhibited, the following translation is most scrupulously literal :

“ CERTAINLY the southern solstice was  
 “ once in the middle of *Asleśhâ*, the northern  
 “ in the first *degree* of *Dhanishṭhâ*, by what is  
 “ recorded in former *Sâstras*. At present one  
 “ solstice is in the first *degree* of *Carcata*, and  
 “ the other in the first of *Macara*: that which  
 “ is recorded not appearing, a change *must*  
 “ *have happened*; and the proof arises from  
 “ ocular demonstrations; *that is*, by observing  
 “ the remote object and its marks at the rising  
 “ or setting of the sun, or by the marks, in a  
 “ large *graduated* circle, of the shadow's in-  
 “ gress and egress. The sun, by turning back  
 “ without having reached *Macara*, destroys the  
 “ south and the west; by turning back with-  
 “ out having reached *Carcata*, the north and  
 “ east. By returning, when he has just  
 “ passed the winter solstitial point, he makes  
 “ wealth secure and grain abundant, since he  
 “ moves thus according to nature; but the sun,  
 “ by moving unnaturally, excites terror.”

Now the *Hindu* Astronomers agree, that  
 the 1st *January* 1790 was in the year 4891 of  
 the



the *Caliyuga*, or their *fourth* period, at the beginning of which, they say, the equinoctial points were in the first degrees of *Mésba* and *Tulà*; but they are also of opinion, that the vernal equinox oscillates from the third of *Mma* to the twenty-seventh of *Mésba* and back again in 7200 years, which they divide into four *pádas*, and consequently that it moves, in the two intermediate *pádas*, from the first to the twenty-seventh of *Mésba* and back again in 3600 years; the colure cutting their ecliptick in the first of *Mésba*, which coincides with the first of *Afwin*, at the beginning of every such oscillatory period. VARA'HA, surnamed MIHRA, or the Sun, from his knowledge of astronomy, and usually distinguished by the title of *Acharya*, or teacher of the *Véda*, lived confessedly when the *Caliyuga* was far advanced; and, since by actual observation he found the solstitial points in the first degrees of *Carcata* and *Macara*, the equinoctial points were at the same time in the first of *Mésba* and *Tulà*: he lived, therefore, in the year 3600 of the fourth *Indian* period, or 1291 years before 1st *January* 1790, that is, about the year 499 of our era. This date corresponds with the *ayanánfa*, or precession, calculated by the rule of the *Suryasiddhánta*; for  $19^{\circ} 21' 54''$  would be the precession of the equinox in 1291 years, according to the *Hindu* computation of  $54''$  annually, which gives us the origin of  
 the

the *Indian* Zodiack nearly ; but, by NEWTON's demonstrations, which agree as well with the phenomena, as the varying density of our earth will admit, the equinox recedes about 50" every year, and has receded  $17^{\circ} 55' 50''$  since the time of VARA'HA, which gives us more nearly in our own sphere the first degree of *Misra* in that of the *Hindus*. By the observation recorded in older *Sāstras*, the equinox had gone back  $23^{\circ} 20'$ , or about 1680 years had intervened, between the age of the *Muni* and that of the modern astronomer: the former observation, therefore, must have been made about 2971 years before 1st January 1790, that is 1181 before CHRIST.

WE come now to the commentary, which contains information of the greatest importance. By former *Sāstras* are meant, says BHATTŌP-TALA, the books of PARĀ'SARA and of other *Munis*; and he then cites from the *Parāśara Sanhitā* the following passage, which is in modulated prose, and in a style much resembling that of the *Vēdas*.

SRAVISHTA'DYA'T paushn'ardhantan charah  
 śi'sirō ; vasantah paushnārdhāt rōhinyāntan ;  
 śaumyādyādāślēshārdhantan grīshmah ; prāvri-  
 dāślēshārdhāt hastāntan ; chitrādyāt jyesh't'hārd-  
 hantan śarāt ; hēmantō jyesh't'hārdhāt vaiśh-  
 n'avāntan.

“ THE

“ THE season of *Sifra* is from the first of  
 “ *Dhanist’bà* to the middle of *Révati*; that of  
 “ *Vasanta* from the middle of *Révati* to the  
 “ end of *Rôhini*; that of *Grishma* from the be-  
 “ ginning of *Mrigrâsira* to the middle of  
 “ *Aslêshà*; that of *Vershà* from the middle of  
 “ *Aslêshà* to the end of *Hasla*; that of *Sarad*  
 “ from the first of *Chitrà* to the middle of  
 “ *Jyêsh’t’bà*; that of *Hémanta* from the middle  
 “ of *Jyêsh’t’bà* to the end of *Sravanà*.”

THIS account of the six *Indian* seasons, each  
 of which is co-extensive with two signs, or four  
 lunar stations and a half, places the solsti-  
 tial points, as VARA’HA has asserted, in the  
 first degree of *Dhanist’bà*, and the middle,  
 or  $6^{\circ} 40'$ , of *Aslêshà*, while the equinoctial  
 points were in the tenth degree of *Bharanî*  
 and  $3^{\circ} 20'$  of *Visâc’bà*; but, in the time of  
 VARA’HA, the solstitial colure passed through  
 the 10th degree of *Punarvasu* and  $3^{\circ} 20'$  of  
*Uttarâshvârâ*, while the equinoctial colure cut  
 the *Hindu* ecliptick in the first of *Aswinî*  
 and  $6^{\circ} 40'$  of *Chitrà*, or the *Yôga* and only star  
 of that mansion, which, by the way, is in-  
 dubitably the *Spike* of the *Virgin*, from the  
 known longitude of which all other points in  
 the *Indian* Zodiack may be computed. It can-  
 not escape notice, that PARA’SARA does not use  
 in this passage the phrase *at present*, which oc-  
 curs

curs in the text of VARA'HA ; so that the places of the colures might have been ascertained *before* his time, and a considerable change might have happened in their true position without any change in the phrases by which the seasons were distinguished ; as our popular language in astronomy remains unaltered, though the Zodiacal asterisms are now removed a whole sign from the places where they have left their names : it is manifest, nevertheless, that PARASARA must have written *within twelve centuries* before the beginning of our era, and that single fact, as we shall presently show, leads to very momentous consequences in regard to the system of *Indian* history and literature.

ON the comparison, which might easily be made, between the colures of PARASARA and those ascribed by EUDOXUS to CHIRON, the supposed assistant and instructor of the *Argonauts*, I shall say very little ; because the whole *Argonautick* story (which neither was, according to HERODOTUS, nor, indeed, could have been, originally *Grecian*) appears, even when stripped of its poetical and fabulous ornaments, extremely disputable ; and, whether it was founded on a league of the *Helladian* princes and states for the purpose of checking, on a favourable opportunity, the overgrown power of *Egypt*, or with a view to secure the commerce



commerce of the *Euxine* and appropriate the  
 wealth of *Colchis*, or, as I am disposed to be-  
 lieve, on an emigration from *Africa* and *Asia*  
 of that adventurous race who had first been  
 established in *Chaldea*; whatever, in short,  
 gave rise to the fable, which the old poets have  
 so richly embellished, and the old historians  
 have so inconsiderately adopted, it seems to me  
 very clear, even on the principles of NEWTON,  
 and on the same authorities to which he refers,  
 that the voyage of the *Argonauts* must have  
 preceded the year in which his calculations  
 led him to place it. BATTUS built *Cyrene*,  
 says our great philosopher, on the site of  
*Irafa*, the city of ANTÆUS, in the year  
 633 before CHRIST; yet he soon after calls  
 EURIPYLUS, with whom the *Argonauts* had  
 a conference, king of *Cyrene*, and in both  
 passages he cites PINDAR, whom I acknow-  
 ledge to have been the most learned, as  
 well as the sublimest, of poets. Now, if I  
 understand PINDAR (which I will not as-  
 sert, and I neither possess nor remember at  
 present the *Scholia*, which I formerly perused)  
 the fourth *Pythian* Ode begins with a short pa-  
 negyrick on ARCESILAS of *Cyrene*: “ Where,  
 “ says the bard, the priestess, who sat near  
 “ the golden eagles of Jove, prophesied of  
 “ old, when APOLLO was not absent from his  
 “ mansion,

“ mansion, that BATTUS, the colonizer of  
 “ fruitful *Lybia*, having just left the sa-  
 “ cred isle (*Thera*), should build a city  
 “ excelling in cars, on the splendid breast of  
 “ earth, and, *with the seventeenth generation*,  
 “ should refer to himself the *Theræan* pre-  
 “ diction of MEDEA, which that princess of  
 “ the *Colchians*, that impetuous daughter of  
 “ ÆETES, breathed from her immortal mouth,  
 “ and thus delivered to the half-divine ma-  
 “ riners of the warrior JASON.” From this  
 introduction to the noblest and most animated of  
 the *Argonautick* poems, it appears, that *fifteen*  
*complete generations* had intervened between the  
 voyage of JASON and the emigration of  
 BATTUS; so that considering *three* generations  
 as equal to *an hundred* or *an hundred and twenty*  
 years, which NEWTON admits to be the *Grecian*  
 mode of computing them, we must place that  
 voyage at least *five* or *six hundred* years before  
 the time fixed by NEWTON himself, according  
 to his own computation, for the building of  
*Cyrene*; that is, *eleven* or *twelve hundred and*  
*thirty-three* years before CHRIST; an age very  
 near on a medium to that of PARASARA. If  
 the poet means afterwards to say, as I under-  
 stand him, that ARCESILAS, his contemporary,  
 was the *eighth* in descent from BATTUS, we  
 shall draw nearly the same conclusion, without  
 having

having recourse to the unnatural reckoning of *thirty-three* or *forty* years to a generation ; for PINDAR was forty years old, when the *Per-  
sians*, having crossed the *Hellepont*, were nobly  
 resisted at *Thermopylae*, and gloriously defeated  
 at *Salamis* : he was born, therefore, about the  
*sixty-fifth Olympiad*, or five hundred and twenty  
 years before our era ; so that, by allowing  
 more naturally *six* or *seven hundred* years to  
*twenty-three* generations, we may at a medium  
 place the voyage of JASON about one thousand  
 one hundred and seventy years before Our  
 Saviour, or about *forty-five* years before the  
 beginning of the *Newtonian* chronology.

THE description of the old colures by  
 EUDOXUS, if we implicitly rely on his testi-  
 mony and on that of HIPPARCHUS, who was,  
 indisputably, a great astronomer for the age in  
 which he lived, affords, I allow, sufficient evi-  
 dence of some rude observation about 937 years  
 before the *Christian* epoch ; and, if the cardinal  
 points had receded from those colures  $36^{\circ} 29'$   
 $10''$  at the beginning of the year 1690, and  
 $37^{\circ} 52' 30''$  on the first of *January* in the pre-  
 sent year, they must have gone back  $3^{\circ} 23' 20''$   
 between the observation implied by PARASAR  
 and that recorded by EUDOXUS ; or, in other  
 words, 244 years must have elapsed between  
 the two observations : but, this disquisition  
 having

having little relation to our principal subject, I proceed to the last couplets of our *Indian* astronomer VARA'HA MIHIRA: which, though merely astrological and consequently absurd, will give occasion to remarks of no small importance. They imply, that, when the solstices are not in the first degrees of *Carcata* and *Macara*, the motion of the sun is contrary to nature, and being caused, as the commentator intimates, by some *utpāta*, or preternatural agency, must necessarily be productive of misfortune; and this vain idea seems to indicate a very superficial knowledge even of the system which *Varāha* undertook to explain; but he might have adopted it solely as a religious tenet, on the authority of GARGA, a priest of eminent sanctity, who expresses the same wild notion in the following couplet:

Yadā nivertatē'prāptah fraviṣṭāmuttarāyaṇē,  
 Aśleṣhān dācchinē'prāptastadāvidyāmahadbhayaṇi.

“WHEN the *sun* returns, not having reached  
 “*Dhanishṭ'bhā* in the northern solstice, or not hav-  
 “ing reached *Aśleṣhā* in the southern, then  
 “let a *man* feel great apprehension of danger.”

PARA'SARA himself entertained a similar opinion, that any irregularity in the solstices would indicate approaching calamity; *Yadāprāptō vaiṣṇavāntam*, says he, *udanmārgē prepadyatē, dācchinē, aśleṣhām vā mahāb bhayaṇa*, that is,  
 “When having reached the end of *Sravana*,  
 in



“ in the northern path, or half of *Aśleṣhā* in  
 “ the southern, he still advances, *it is* a cause  
 “ of great fear.” This notion possibly had its  
 rise before the regular precession of the cardinal  
 points had been observed ; but we may also  
 remark, that some of the lunar mansions were  
 considered as inauspicious, and others as fortunate :  
 thus *MENU*, the first *Indian* lawgiver, ordains,  
 that certain rites shall be performed under the  
 influence of a happy *Nacṣatra* ; and where he  
 forbids any female name to be taken from a  
 constellation, the most learned commentator  
 gives *Ārdra* and *Révatī* as examples of ill-omened  
 names, appearing by design to skip over others  
 that must first have occurred to him. Whether  
*Dhanisthā* and *Aśleṣhā* were inauspicious or  
 prosperous I have not learned ; but, whatever  
 might be the ground of *VARA’HA*’s astrological  
 rule, we may collect from his astronomy, which  
 was grounded on observation, that the solstice  
 had receded at least  $23^{\circ}.20'$  between his time  
 and that of *PARA’SARA* ; for though he refers  
 its position to the *signs*, instead of the *lunar  
 mansions*, yet all the *Pandits* with whom I have  
 conversed on the subject, unanimously assert,  
 that the first degrees of *Méṣa* and *Aśvinī*  
 are coincident. Since the two ancient sages  
 name only the lunar asterisms, it is probable,  
 that the solar division of the zodiac into twelve  
 signs was not generally used in their

days ; and we know, from the comment on the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, that the lunar month, by which all religious ceremonies are still regulated, was in use before the solar. When M. BAILLY asks, “ Why the *Hindus* established the beginning of the precession, according to their ideas of it, in the year of CHRIST 499 ? ” to which his calculations also had led him, we answer, Because *in that year* the vernal equinox was found by observation in the origin of their ecliptick ; and since they were of opinion, that it must have had the same position in the first year of the *Caliyuga*, they were induced by their erroneous theory to fix the beginning of their fourth period 3600 years before the time of VARA’HA, and to account for PARA’SARA’S observation by supposing an *utpāta*, or prodigy.

To what purpose, it may be asked, have we ascertained the age of the *Munis* ? Who was PARA’SARA ? Who was GARGA ? With whom were they contemporary, or with whose age may their’s be compared ? What light will these inquiries throw on the history of *India* or of mankind ? I am happy in being able to answer those questions with confidence and precision.

ALL the *Brāhmins* agree, that only one PARA’SARA is named in their sacred records ; that he composed the astronomical book before cited, and a law tract, which is now in my possession ;  
that

that he was the grandson of VASISHT'HA, another astronomer and legislator, whose works are still extant, and who was the preceptor of RA'MA, king of *Aydhya*; that he was the father of VYA'SA, by whom the *Vedas* were arranged in the form which they now bear, and whom CRISHNA himself names with exalted praise in the *Gita*; so that, by the admission of the *Pandits* themselves, we find only three generations between two of the RA'MAS, whom they consider as incarnate portions of the divinity; and PARA'SARA might have lived till the beginning of the *Caliyuga*, which the mistaken doctrine of an oscillation in the cardinal points has compelled the *Hindus* to place 1920 years too early. This error, added to their fanciful arrangement of the four ages, has been the source of many absurdities; for they insist, that VA'LMIC, whom they cannot but allow to have been contemporary with RA'MACHANDRA, lived in the age of VYA'SA, who consulted him on the composition of the *Mabábhárat*, and who was personally known to BALARA'MA, the brother of CRISHNA. When a very learned *Bráhmen* had repeated to me an agreeable story of a conversation between VA'LMIC and VYA'SA, I expressed my surprize at an interview between two bards, whose ages were separated by a period of 864,000 years; but he



soon reconciled himself to so monstrous an anachronism, by observing, that the longevity of the *Munis* was preternatural, and that no limit could be set to divine power. By the same recourse to miracles or to prophecy, he would have answered another objection equally fatal to his chronological system: it is agreed by all, that the lawyer YĀ'GYAWALĪYA was an attendant on the court of JANACA, whose daughter SĪ'TĀ' was the constant, but unfortunate wife of the great RĀ'MA, the hero of VĀ'LMĪC's poem; but that lawyer himself, at the very opening of his work, which now lies before me, names both PARĀ'SARA and VYĀ'SA among twenty authors, whose tracts form the body of original *Indian* law. By the way, since VĀSISHT'HA is more than once named in the *Mānavaśāhita*, we may be certain, that the laws ascribed to MENU, in whatever age they might have been first promulgated, could not have received the form in which we now see them above *three thousand* years ago.

THE age and functions of GARGA lead to consequences yet more interesting: he was confessedly the *purōhita*, or officiating priest, of CRISHNA himself, who, when only a herdsman's boy at Mat'burā, revealed his divine character to GARGA, by running to him with more than mortal benignity on his countenance, when the priest had invoked NĀ'RA'YAN. His daughter  
was



was eminent for her piety and her learning, and the *Bráhmans* admit, without considering the consequence of their admission, that she is thus addressed in the *Veda* itself: *Tata úrdbwan nõ vå samópi, GA'RGI, ésha ádityò dylámúrdhànan tapati, dyà vå bhúmin tapati, bhúmyà subhvan tapati, lécán tapati, antaran tapatyanantaran tapati*; or, "That Sun, O daughter of GARGA, " than which nothing is higher, to which no- " thing is equal, enlightens the summit of the " sky; with the sky enlightens the earth; " with the earth enlightens the lower worlds; " enlightens the higher worlds; enlightens " other worlds; it enlightens the breast, " enlightens all besides the breast." From these facts, which the *Bráhmans* cannot deny, and from these concessions, which they unanimously make, we may reasonably infer, that if *VYA'SA* was not the composer of the *Vedas*, he added at least something of his own to the scattered fragments of a more ancient work, or perhaps to the loose traditions which he had collected; but whatever be the comparative antiquity of the *Hindu* scriptures, we may safely conclude, that the *Mosaick* and *Indian* chronologies are perfectly consistent; that *MENU*, son of *BRAHMA'*, was the *Adam*, or *first*, created mortal, and consequently our *ADAM*; that *MENU*, child of the Sun, was preserved with *seven* others, in a *babitra*, or ca-

pacious ark, from an universal deluge, and must therefore be our NOAH ; that HIRANYACASIPU, the giant *with a golden axe*, and *Vali* or *Bali*, were impious and arrogant monarchs, and, most probably, our NIMROD and BELUS ; that the three RA'MAS, two of whom were invincible warriors, and the third, not only valiant in war, but the patron of agriculture and *wine*, which derives an epithet from his name, were different representations of the *Grecian Bacchus*, and either the RA'MA of scripture, or his colony personified, or the Sun, first adored by his idolatrous family ; that a considerable emigration from *Chaldea* into *Greece*, *Italy*, and *India*, happened about *twelve* centuries before the birth of Our Saviour ; that SA'CYA, or SI'SAK, about two hundred years after VYA'SA, either in person or by a colony from *Egypt* imported into this country the mild heresy of the ancient *Bauddhas* ; and that the dawn of true *Indian* history appears only three or four centuries before the *Christian* era, the preceding ages being clouded by allegory or fable.

As a specimen of that fabling and allegorizing spirit which has ever induced the *Bráhmens* to disguise their whole system of history, philosophy, and religion, I produce a passage from the *Bhágavat*, which, however strange and ridiculous, is very curious in itself, and closely connected with the subject of this Essay :

it

it is taken from the fifth *Scandha*, or Section,  
 which is written in modulated prose. “ There  
 “ are some,” says the *Indian* author, “ who, for  
 “ the purpose of meditating intensely on the  
 “ holy son of *VASUDE’VA*, imagine yon ce-  
 “ lestial sphere to represent the figure of that  
 “ aquatick animal which we call *Sis’umāra* ; its  
 “ head being turned downwards, and its body  
 “ bent in a circle, they conceive *Dhruva*, or  
 “ the pole star, to be fixed on the point of its  
 “ tail; on the middle part of the tail they see  
 “ four stars, *Prejāpati*, *Agni*, *Indra*, *Dherma*,  
 “ and on its base two others, *Dhātṛi* and *Vid-  
 “ bhātṛi* : on its rump are the *Septarshis*, or  
 “ seven stars of the *Sacata*, or *Wain* ; on its  
 “ back the path of the Sun, called *Ajavit’bī*, or  
 “ the *Series of Kids* ; on its belly the *Gangā* of  
 “ the sky : *Punarvasu* and *Pushya* gleam re-  
 “ spectively on its right and left haunches ;  
 “ *Ārdra* and *Aśl’shā* on its right and left feet or  
 “ *feet* ; *Abhijit* and *Uttarāshad’bā* in its right  
 “ and left nostrils ; *Śravaṇā* and *Purvāṣṭad’bā*  
 “ in its right and left eyes ; *Dhanisht’bā* and  
 “ *Mūla* on its right and left ears. Eight con-  
 “ stellations, belonging to the summer Solstice,  
 “ *Maghā*, *Purvaphalgunī*, *Uttaraphalgunī*, *Haf-  
 “ ta*, *Chitrā*, *Śwātī*, *Viśākhā*, *Anurādhā*,  
 “ may be conceived in the ribs of its left side ;  
 “ and as many asterisms, connected with the



“ winter Solstice, *Mrigasiras*, *Rohini*, *Crittica*,  
 “ *Bharani*, *Aswini*, *Révatî*, *Uttarabhadrapadâ*,  
 “ *Purvabhadrapadâ*, may be imagined on the  
 “ ribs of its right side in an inverse order : let  
 “ *Satabhiskâ* and *Jyêshthâ* be placed on its right  
 “ and left shoulders. In its upper jaw is  
 “ *Agastya*, in its lower *Yama* ; in its mouth the  
 “ planet *Mangala* ; in its part of generation,  
 “ *Sanaischara* ; on its hump, *Vrihaspati* ; in  
 “ its breast, the Sun ; in its heart, *Narayan* ;  
 “ in its front, the Moon ; in its navel, *Usanas* ;  
 “ on its two nipples, the two *Aswinas* ; in its  
 “ ascending and descending breaths, *Budha* ;  
 “ on its throat, *Râhu* ; in all its limbs, *Cetus*,  
 “ or comets ; and in its hairs, or bristles, the  
 “ whole multitude of Stars.”

It is necessary to remark, that, although  
 the *sûmâra* be generally described as the *sea-*  
*bog* or *porpoise*, which we frequently have seen  
 playing in the *Ganges*, yet *sûmâr*, which seems  
 derived from the *Sanscrit*, means in *Persian* a  
 large lizard : the passage just exhibited may ne-  
 vertheless relate to an animal of the cetaceous  
 order, and possibly to the dolphin of the an-  
 cients.

BEFORE I leave the sphere of the *Hin-*  
*dus*, I cannot help mentioning a singular fact :  
 in the *Sanscrit* language, *Ricsha* means a *constel-*  
*lation* and a *bear*, so that *Mabarsha* may denote  
 either a *great bear*, or a *great asterism*. Etymo-  
 logists



logists may, perhaps, derive the *Megas Arctos* of the *Greeks* from an *Indian* compound ill understood; but I will only observe, with the wild *American*, that a bear *with a very long tail* could never have occurred to the imagination of any one who had seen the animal. I may be permitted to add, on the subject of the *Indian Zodiack*, that, if I have erred in a former Essay, where the longitude of the lunar mansions is computed from the first star in our constellation of the Ram, I have been led into error by the very learned and ingenious M. BAILLY, who relied, I presume, on the authority of M. LE GENTIL: the origin of the *Hindu Zodiack*, according to the *Sûrya Siddhânta*, must be nearly  $\gamma$   $19^{\circ}$ .  $21'$ .  $54''$ . in our sphere, and the longitude of *Chitrâ*, or the Spike, must of course be  $109^{\circ}$ .  $21'$ .  $54''$ . from the vernal equinox; but, since it is difficult by that computation to arrange the twenty-seven mansions and their several stars, as they are delineated and enumerated in the *Retnamâlâ*, I must for the present suppose, with M. BAILLY, that the *Zodiack* of the *Hindus* had two origins, one constant and the other variable; and a farther inquiry into the subject must be reserved for a season of retirement and leisure.

## DISSERTATION XI.

ON THE

## INDIAN GAME OF CHESS.

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IF evidence be required to prove that Chess was invented by the *Hindus*, we may be satisfied with the testimony of the *Persians*; who, though as much inclined as other nations to appropriate the ingenious inventions of a foreign people, unanimously agree, that the game was imported from the west of *India*, together with the charming fables of *VISHNUSARMAN*, in the sixth century of our era. It seems to have been immemorially known in *Hindustan* by the name of *Chaturanga*, that is, the four *anga's*, or *members*, of an army, which are said in the *Amaracōṣha* to be *baṣṭyaswarat'hapādātam*, or *elephants, horses, chariots, and foot-soldiers*; and in this sense the word is frequently used by

by Epick poets in their descriptions of real armies. By a natural corruption of the pure *Sanfcrit* word, it was changed by the old *Persians* into *Chatrang*; but the *Arabs*, who soon after took possession of their country, had neither the initial nor final letter of that word in their alphabet, and consequently altered it further into *Shatranj*, which found its way presently into the modern *Persian*, and at length into the dialects of *India*, where the true derivation of the name is known only to the learned. Thus has a very significant word in the sacred language of the *Bráhmans* been transformed by successive changes into *axedrez*, *scacchi*, *échecs*, *chefs*, and, by a whimsical concurrence of circumstances, given birth to the *English* word *check*, and even a name to the *Exchequer* of *Great Britain*. The beautiful simplicity and extreme perfection of the game, as it is commonly played in *Europe* and *Asia*, convince me, that it was invented by one effort of some great genius; not completed by gradual improvements, but formed, to use the phrase of *Italian* criticks, *by the first intention*: yet of this simple game, so exquisitely contrived, and so certainly invented in *India*, I cannot find any account in the classical writings of the *Bráhmans*. It is, indeed, confidently asserted, that *Sanfcrit* books on Chess exist in  
this

this country, and, if they can be procured at *Banâret*, they will assuredly be sent to us: at present I can only exhibit a description of a very ancient *Indian* game of the same kind; but more complex, and, in my opinion, more modern, than the simple Chess of the *Persians*. This game is also called *Chaturanga*, but more frequently *Chaturâjî*, or the *four Kings*, since it is played by four persons representing as many princes, two allied armies combating on each side: the description is taken from the *Bhâwîshya Purân*, in which YUDHISHT'HIR is represented conversing with VYÂ'SA, who explains at the king's request the form of the fictitious warfare, and the principal rules of it: "Having marked *eight* squares on all sides," says the Sage, "place the *red* army to the east, the *green* to the south, the *yellow* to the west, and the *black* to the north: let the *elephant* stand on the left of the *king*; next to him the *horse*: then the *boat*; and, before them all, four *foot-soldiers*; but the *boat* must be placed in the *angle* of the board." From this passage it clearly appears, that an army, with its four *anga's*, must be placed on each side of the board, since an *elephant* could not stand, in any other position, on the *left* hand of each *king*; and RA'DHA'CA'NT informed me, that the board consisted, like ours, of *sixty-four* squares,



squares, half of them occupied by the forces, and half vacant: he added, that this game is mentioned in the oldest law-books, and that it was invented by the wife of RA'VAN, King of *Lancà*, in order to amuse him with an image of war, while his metropolis was closely besieged by RA'MA in the second age of the world. He had not heard the story told by FIRDAUSI near the close of the *Sháhnámah*, and it was probably carried into *Persia* from *Cányacuvja* by BORZU, the favourite physician, thence called *Vaidya-priya*, of the great ANU'SHIRAVA'N; but he said, that the *Bráhmans* of *Gaur*, or *Bengal*, were once celebrated for superior skill in the game, and that his father, together with his spiritual preceptor, JAGANNA'T'H, now living at *Tribeni*, had instructed two young *Bráhmans* in all the rules of it, and had sent them to *Jayanagar* at the request of the late *Rájá*, who had liberally rewarded them. A ship, or boat, is substituted, we see, in this complex game for the *rat'h*, or armed chariot, which the *Bengalese* pronounce *rot'h*, and which the *Persians* changed into *rokh*, whence came the *rook* of some *European* nations; as the *vierge* and *fol* of the *French* are supposed to be corruptions of *ferz* and *fil*, the prime minister and elephant of the *Persians* and *Arabs*. It were vain to seek an etymology of the word *rook* in the modern *Persian*

*san* language; for, in all the passages extracted from FIRDAUSI and JA'MI, where *rokh* is conceived to mean a *hero*, or a *fabulous bird*, it signifies, I believe, no more than a *cheek* or a *face*: as in the following description of a procession in *Egypt*: “when a thousand youths, like cypresses, box-trees, and firs, with locks as fragrant, cheeks as fair, and bosoms as delicate, as lilies of the valley, were marching gracefully along, thou wouldst have said, that the new spring was *turning his face* (not as HYDE translates the words, *carried on rokhs*) from station to station;” and, as to the battle of the *duwázdeh rokh*, which D’HERBELOT supposes to mean *douze preux chevaliers*, I am strongly inclined to think, that the phrase only signifies a combat of *twelve persons face to face*, or six on a side, I cannot agree with my friend RA’DHA’CA’NT, that a *ship* is properly introduced in this imaginary warfare instead of a *chariot*, in which the old *Indian* warriors constantly fought; for though the *king* might be supposed to sit in a *car*, so that the four *anga’s* would be complete, and though it may often be necessary in a real campaign to pass rivers or lakes, yet no river is marked on the *Indian*, as it is on the *Chinese* chess-board, and the intermixture of ships with horses, elephants, and infantry embattled on a plain, is an

an absurdity not to be defended. The use of *dice* may, perhaps, be justified in a representation of war, in which *fortune* has unquestionably a great share, but it seems to exclude Chess from the rank which has been assigned to it among the sciences, and to give the game before us the appearance of *whist*, except that pieces are used openly, instead of cards which are held concealed: nevertheless we find, that the moves in the game described by VYA'SA were to a certain degree regulated by *chance*; for he proceeds to tell his royal pupil, that "if *cinque* be thrown, the *king* or a *pawn* must be moved; if *quatre*, the *elephant*; if *trois*, the *horse*; and if *deux*, the *boat*."

He then proceeds to the moves: "the *king* passes freely on all sides but over *one* square only; and with the same limitation the *pawn* moves, but he advances straight forward, and kills his enemy through an angle; the *elephant* marches in all directions, as far as his driver pleases; the *horse* runs obliquely traversing three squares; and the *ship* goes over two squares diagonally." The *elephant*, we find, has the powers of our *queen*, as we are pleased to call the *minister*, or *general*, of the *Persians*; and the *ship* has the motion of the piece to which we give the unaccountable appellation of *bishop*, but with a restriction which must greatly lessen his value.



THE bard next exhibits a few general rules and superficial directions for the conduct of the game: "the *paruns* and the *ship* both kill and  
 " may be voluntarily killed; while the *king*,  
 " the *elephant*, and the *horse* may slay the foe,  
 " but cannot expose themselves to be slain.  
 " Let each player preserve his own forces with  
 " extreme care, securing his *king* above all,  
 " and not sacrificing a superior, to keep an inferior, piece." Here the commentator on the *Purán* observes, that the *horse*, who has the choice of *eight* moves from any central position, must be preferred to the *ship*, who has only the choice of *four*; but this argument would not have equal weight in the common game, where the *bishop* and *tower* command a whole line, and where a *knight* is always of less value than a *tower* in action, or the *bishop* of that side on which the attack is begun. "It is by  
 " the overbearing power of the *elephant*, that  
 " the *king* fights boldly; let the whole army,  
 " therefore, be abandoned, in order to secure  
 " the *elephant*: the *king* must never place one  
 " *elephant* before another, according to the rule  
 " of GO'TAMA, unless he be compelled by want  
 " of room, for he would thus commit a dangerous fault; and if he can slay one of two  
 " hostile *elephants*, he must destroy that on his  
 " left hand." The last rule is extremely obscure;



seure; but, as GO'TAMA was an illustrious lawyer and philosopher, he would not have condescended to leave directions for the game of *Chaturanga*, if it had not been held in great estimation by the ancient Sages of *India*.

ALL that remains of the passage, which was copied for me by RA'DHA'CA'NT and explained by him, relates to the several modes in which a partial success or complete victory may be obtained by any one of the four players; for we shall see, that, as if a dispute had arisen between two allies, one of the *kings* may assume the command of all the forces, and aim at separate conquest. First; "When any one *king* has placed himself on the square of another *king*, which advantage is called *Sinbāsana*, or the throne, he wins a stake; which is doubled, if he kill the adverse monarch, when he seizes his place; and, if he can seat himself on the throne of his ally, he takes the command of the whole army." Secondly; "If he can occupy successively the thrones of all the three princes, he obtains the victory, which is named *Chaturōjī*, and the stake is doubled, if he kill the last of the three, just before he takes possession of his throne, but if he kill him on his throne, the stake is quadrupled." Thus, as the commentator remarks, in a real warfare, a king

may be considered as victorious, when he seizes the metropolis of his adversary ; but if he can destroy his foe, he displays greater heroism, and relieves his people from any further solicitude. “ Both in gaining the *Sinhāsana* and the *Chaturaj*, says VYA’SĀ, the king must be supported by the *elephants* or by all the forces united.” Thirdly ; “ When one player has his own king on the board, but the king of his partner has been taken, he may replace his captive ally, if he can seize both the adverse kings ; or, if he cannot effect their capture, he may exchange his king for one of them, against the general rule, and thus redeem the allied prince, who will supply his place.” This advantage has the name of *Nripācrishta*, or, *recovered by the king* ; and the *Nauācrishta* seems to be analogous to it, but confined to the case of *ships*. Fourthly ; “ If a *pawn* can march to any square on the opposite extremity of the board, except that of the king, or that of the ship, he assumes whatever power belonged to that square ; and this promotion is called *Shatpada*, or the *six strides*.” Here we find the rule, with a singular exception, concerning the advancement of *pawns*, which often occasions a most interesting struggle at our common chess, and which has furnished the poets and moralists

moralists of *Arabia* and *Persia* with many lively reflections on human life. It appears, that  
 “ this privilege of *Sbat’pada* was not allowable,  
 “ in the opinion of *Go’TAMA*, when a player  
 “ had three *paruns* on the board; but, when  
 “ only one *parun* and one *ship* remained, the  
 “ *pawn* might advance even to the square of a  
 “ *king* or a *ship*, and assume the power of  
 “ either.” Fifthly; “ According to the *Rac-*  
 “ *shasa’s*, or *giants* (that is, the people of  
 “ *Lancà*, where the game was invented), there  
 “ could be neither victory nor defeat, if a *king*  
 “ were left on the plain without force: a  
 “ situation which they named *Càcacàsh’t’ba*.”  
 Sixthly; “ If three *ships* happen to meet, and the  
 “ fourth *ship* can be brought up to them in the  
 “ remaining angle, this has the name of *Vriban-*  
 “ *naucà*; and the player of the fourth seizes all  
 “ the others.” Two or three of the remaining  
 couplets are so dark, either from an error in the  
 manuscript or from the antiquity of the lan-  
 guage, that I could not understand the *Pan-*  
*dit’s* explanation of them, and suspect that they  
 gave even him very indistinct ideas; but it  
 would be easy, if it were worth while, to play  
 at the game by the preceding rules; and a little  
 practice would, perhaps, make the whole in-  
 telligible. One circumstance, in this extract  
 from the *Puràn*, seems very surprizing: all

games of hazard are positively forbidden by MENU, yet the game of *Chaturanga*, in which dice are used, is taught by the great VYA'SA himself, whose law-tract appears with that of GO'TAMA among the eighteen books which form the *Dharmasāstra*; but as RA'DHA'CA'NT and his preceptor JAGANNA'T'H are both employed by Government in compiling a Digest of Indian laws, and as both of them, especially the venerable Sage of *Tribeni*, understand the game, they are able, I presume, to assign reasons, why it should have been excepted from the general prohibition, and even openly taught by ancient and modern *Brāhmans*.



## DISSERTATION XII.

ON THE  
SECOND CLASSICAL BOOKOF THE  
CHINESE.

THE vicinity of *China* to our *Indian* territories, from the capital of which there are not more than *six hundred miles* to the province of YU'NA'N, must necessarily draw our attention to that most ancient and wonderful Empire, even if we had no commercial intercourse with its more distant and maritime provinces; and the benefits that might be derived from a more intimate connexion with a nation long famed for their useful arts and for the valuable productions of their country, are too apparent to require any proof or illustration. My own inclinations and the course of my studies lead me rather to consider at present their *laws*, *politicks*, and *morals*, with which their general literature is closely blended, than

their manufactures and trade; nor will I spare either pains or expence to procure translations of their most approved *law-tracts*, that I may return to *Europe* with distinct ideas, drawn from the fountain-head, of the wisest *Asiatick* legislation. It will probably be a long time before accurate returns can be made to my inquiries concerning the *Chinese Laws*; and, in the interval, the Society will not, perhaps, be displeased to know, that a translation of a most venerable and excellent work may be expected from *Canton* through the kind assistance of an inestimable correspondent.

ACCORDING to a *Chinese* Writer, named LI YANG PING, ' the ancient characters used in  
 ' his country were the outlines of visible ob-  
 ' jects earthly and celestial; but, as things  
 ' merely intellectual could not be expressed by  
 ' those figures, the grammarians of *China*  
 ' contrived to represent the various operations  
 ' of the mind by metaphors drawn from the  
 ' productions of nature: thus the idea of  
 ' roughness and of rotundity, of motion and  
 ' rest, were conveyed to the eye by signs re-  
 ' presenting a mountain, the sky, a river and  
 ' the earth; the figures of the sun, the moon,  
 ' and the stars, differently combined, stood for  
 ' smoothness and splendour, for any thing art-  
 ' fully wrought, or woven with delicate work-  
 ' manship;

\* manſhip; extension, growth, increaſe, and  
 \* many other qualities, were painted in cha-  
 \* racters taken from clouds, from the firma-  
 \* ment, and from the vegetable part of the  
 \* creation; the different ways of moving, agi-  
 \* lity and ſlowneſs, idleneſs and diligence,  
 \* were expreſſed by various inſects, birds, fiſh,  
 \* and quadrupeds: in this manner paſſions  
 \* and ſentiments were traced by the pencil,  
 \* and ideas not ſubject to any ſenſe were exhi-  
 \* bited to the ſight; until by degrees new com-  
 \* binations were invented, new expreſſions ad-  
 \* ded; the characters deviated imperceptibly  
 \* from their primitive ſhape, and the *Chineſe*  
 \* language became not only clear and forcible,  
 \* but rich and elegant in the higheſt degree.'

IN this language, ſo ancient and ſo wonder-  
 fully compoſed, are a multitude of books  
 abounding in uſeful, as well as agreeable, know-  
 ledge; but the higheſt claſs conſiſts of *Five*  
 works; one of which, at leaſt, every *Chineſe*  
 who aſpires to literary honours muſt read  
 again and again, until he poſſeſs it perfectly.

THE *firſt* is purely *Hiſtorical*, containing annals  
 of the Empire from the *two thouſand-three hun-*  
*dred-thirty ſeventh* year before CHRIST: it is  
 entitled SHI' KING, and a verſion of it has been  
 publiſhed in *France*; to which country we are  
 indebted for the moſt authentick and moſt valu-

able specimens of *Chinese* History and Literature, from the compositions which preceded those of HOMER, to the poetical works of the present Emperor, who seems to be a man of the brightest genius and the most amiable affections. We may smile, if we please, at the levity of the *French*, as they laugh without scruple at our seriousness; but let us not so far undervalue our rivals in arts and in arms, as to deny them their just commendation, or to relax our efforts in that noble struggle, by which alone we can preserve our own eminence.

THE Second Classical work of the *Chinese* contains *three hundred* Odes, or short Poems, in praise of ancient sovereigns and legislators, or descriptive of ancient manners, and recommending an imitation of them in the discharge of all publick and domestick duties: they abound in wise maxims, and excellent precepts, 'their whole doctrine, according to *Cun-fu-tsu*, 'in the *Lu'xyu* or *Moral Discourses*, being 'reducible to this grand rule, that we should 'not even entertain a thought of any thing 'base or culpable;' but the copies of the SHI KING, for that is the title of the book, are supposed to have been much disfigured, since the time of that great Philosopher, by spurious passages and exceptionable interpolations; and the style of the Poems is in some parts



parts too metaphorical, while the brevity of other parts renders them obscure; though many think even this obscurity sublime and venerable, like that of ancient cloysters and temples, ‘*shedding*, as MILTON expresses it, a ‘*dim religious light*.’ There is another passage in the LU’NYU’, which deserves to be set down at length: ‘Why, my sons, do you not study the book of Odes? If we creep on the ground, if we lie useless and inglorious, those poems will raise us to true glory: in them we see, as in a mirror, what may best become us, and what will be unbecoming; by their influence we shall be made social, affable, benevolent; for, as musick combines sounds in just melody, so the ancient poetry tempers and composes our passions: the Odes teach us our duty to our parents at home, and abroad to our prince; they instruct us also delightfully in the various productions of nature.’ ‘Hast thou studied, said the Philosopher to his son PEYU, the first of the three hundred Odes on the nuptials of Prince VE’NVAM and the virtuous TAI SU? He who studies them not, resembles a man with his face against a wall, unable to advance a step in virtue and wisdom.’ Most of those Odes are near *three thousand* years old, and some, if we give credit to the *Chinese* annals, considerably

considerably older; but others are somewhat more recent, having been composed under the later Emperors of the *third* family, called SHEU. The work is printed in *four* volumes; and, towards the end of the *first*, we find the Ode, which COUPLET has accurately translated at the beginning of the TA'HIO, or *Great Science*, where it is finely amplified by the Philosopher: I produce the original from the SHI' KING itself, and from the book, in which it is cited, together with a double version, one verbal and another metrical; the only method of doing justice to the poetical compositions of the *Asiatics*. It is a panegyrick on VUCU'N, Prince of *Guey* in the province of *Honang*, who died, near a century old, in the *thirteenth* year of the Emperor PINGVANG, *seven hundred and fifty-six* years before the birth of CHRIST, or *one hundred and forty-eight*, according to Sir ISAAC NEWTON, after the taking of *Troy*; so that the *Chinese* Poet might have been contemporary with HESIOD and HOMER, or at least must have written the Ode before the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were carried into *Greece* by LYCURGUS.

THE verbal translation of the thirty-two original characters is this:

Behold<sup>1</sup> yon<sup>2</sup> reach<sup>4</sup> of the river<sup>3</sup> K<sup>1</sup>;

Its green<sup>5</sup> reeds<sup>6</sup> how<sup>7</sup> luxuriant<sup>1</sup> how<sup>3</sup> luxuriant<sup>1</sup>!

Thus

- <sup>9</sup> Thus <sup>11</sup> is <sup>12</sup> our <sup>13</sup> Prince adorned with virtues;  
<sup>13</sup> As a carver, <sup>14</sup> as a filer, <sup>15</sup> of ivory,  
<sup>17</sup> As a cutter <sup>18</sup> as a polisher, <sup>19</sup> of gems.  
<sup>21</sup> O how elate and sagacious! <sup>22</sup> O how dauntless and composed!  
<sup>23</sup> How worthy of fame! <sup>24</sup> How worthy of reverence!  
<sup>25</sup> We have a Prince adorned with virtues,  
<sup>29</sup> Whom to the end <sup>30</sup> of <sup>31</sup> time <sup>32</sup> we can not forget.\*

## THE PARAPHRASE,

Behold, where yon blue riv'let glides  
 Along the laughing dale;  
 Light reeds bedeck its verdant sides,  
 And frolick in the gale:

So shines our Prince! In bright array  
 The Virtues round him wait;  
 And sweetly smile th' auspicious day,  
 That rais'd Him o'er our State.

As pliant hands in shapes refin'd  
 Rich iv'ry carve and smoothe,  
 His *Laws* thus mould each ductile mind,  
 And every passion soothe.

As gems are taught by patient art  
 In sparkling ranks to beam,  
 With *Manners* thus he forms the heart,  
 And spreads a gen'ral gleam.

What soft, yet awful dignity!  
 What meek, yet manly, grace!  
 What sweetness dances in his eye,  
 And blossoms in his face!

So shines our Prince ! A sky-born crowd  
 Of Virtues round him blaze :  
 Ne'er shall Oblivion's murky cloud  
 Obscure his deathless praise.

THE prediction of the Poet has hitherto been accomplished ; but he little imagined, that his composition would be admired, and his Prince celebrated in a language not then formed, and by the natives of regions so remote from his own.

IN the *tenth* leaf of the TA' HIO a beautiful comparison is quoted from another Ode in the SHI' KING, which deserves to be exhibited in the same form with the preceding :

- \* The <sup>1</sup>peach-tree, how <sup>2</sup>fair ! how <sup>3</sup>graceful !
- \* Its <sup>4</sup>leaves, how <sup>5</sup>blooming ! how <sup>6</sup>pleasant !
- \* Such is <sup>8</sup>a <sup>9</sup>bride, when she <sup>10</sup>enters her <sup>11</sup>bridegroom's house,
- \* And <sup>12</sup>pays due attention to her <sup>13</sup>whole <sup>14</sup>family.<sup>15</sup>

The simile may thus be rendered :

Gay child of Spring, the garden's queen,  
 Yon peach-tree charms the roving sight :  
 Its fragrant leaves how richly green !  
 Its blossoms how divinely bright !

So softly smiles the blooming bride  
 By love and conscious Virtue led  
 O'er her new mansion to preside,  
 And placid joys around her spread.



THE next leaf exhibits a comparison of a different nature, rather sublime than agreeable, and conveying rather censure than praise :

<sup>1</sup> O how <sup>2</sup>horridly <sup>3</sup>impends <sup>4</sup>yon southern mountain !

<sup>5</sup> Its <sup>6</sup>rocks in how <sup>7</sup>vast, how <sup>8</sup>rude a heap !

<sup>9</sup> Thus <sup>10</sup>loftily thou <sup>11</sup>sittest, O <sup>12</sup>minister of YN ;

<sup>13</sup> All the <sup>14</sup>people <sup>15</sup>look up to thee with <sup>16</sup>dread.

Which may be thus paraphrased :

See, where yon crag's imperious height

The sunny highland crowns,

And, hideous as the brow of night,

Above the torrent frowns !

So scowls the Chief, whose will is law,

Regardless of our state ;

While millions gaze with painful awe,

With fear allied to hate.

It was a very ancient practice in *China* to paint or engrave moral sentences and approved verses on vessels in constant use ; as the words RENEW THYSELF DAILY were inscribed on the basin of the Emperor TANG, and the poem of KIEN LONG, who is now on the throne, in praise of tea, has been published on a set of porcelain cups ; and, if the description just cited of a selfish and insolent statesman were, in the same manner, constantly presented to the eyes and attention of rulers, it might produce some benefit

benefit to their subjects and to themselves; especially if the comment of TSEM TSU, who may be called the XENOPHON, as CUN FU TSU' was the SOCRATES, and MEM TSU the PLATO, of *China*, were added to illustrate and enforce it.

If the rest of the *three hundred Odes* be similar to the specimens adduced by those great moralists in their works, which the *French* have made publick, I should be very solicitous to procure our nation the honour of bringing to light the *second* classical book of the *Chinese*. The *third*, called YEKING, or the book of Changes, believed to have been written by Fo, the HERMES of the East, and consisting of right lines variously disposed, is hardly intelligible to the most learned *Mandarins*; and CUN FU TSU' himself, who was prevented by death from accomplishing his design of elucidating it, was dissatisfied with all the interpretations of the earliest commentators. As to the *fifth*, or LIKI, which that excellent man compiled from old monuments, it consists chiefly of the *Chinese* ritual, and of tracts on Moral Duties; but the *fourth*, entitled CHUNG CIEU, or *Spring and Autumn*, by which the same incomparable writer meant the *flourishing* state of an Empire under a virtuous monarch, and the *fall* of kingdoms

doms under bad governors, must be an interesting work in every nation. The powers, however, of an individual are so limited, and the field of knowledge is so vast, that I dare not promise more, than to procure, if any exertions of mine will avail, a complete translation of the SHI' KING, together with an authentick abridgement of the *Chinese* laws, civil and criminal. A native of *Canton*, whom I knew some years ago in *England*, and who passed his first examinations with credit in his way to literary distinctions, but was afterwards allured from the pursuit of learning by a prospect of success in trade, has favoured me with the *Three Hundred Odes* in the original, together with the LU'NYU', a faithful version of which was published at *Paris* near a century ago; but he seems to think, that it would require three or four years to complete a translation of them; and Mr. Cox informs me, that none of the *Chinese*, to whom he has access, *possess leisure and perseverance enough for such a task*; yet he hopes, with the assistance of WHANG ATONG, to send me next season some of the poems translated into *English*. A little encouragement would induce this young *Chinese* to visit *India*, and some of his countrymen would, perhaps, accompany him; but, though considerable advantage

vantage to the public, as well as to letters, might be reaped from the knowledge and ingenuity of such emigrants, yet we must wait for a time of greater national wealth and prosperity, before such a measure can be formally recommended by us to our patrons at the helm of government.

DIS-



DISSERTATION XIII.

ON THE

ANTIQUITY

OF THE

INDIAN ZODIACK.

---

**I** ENGAGE to support an opinion (which the learned and industrious M. MONTUCLA seems to treat with extreme contempt), that the *Indian* division of the Zodiack was not borrowed from the *Greeks* or *Arabs*, but, having been known in this country from time immemorial, and being the same in part with that used by other nations of the old *Hindu* race, was probably invented by the first progenitors of that race before their dispersion. “ The *Indians*, he  
 “ says, have two divisions of the Zodiack; one,  
 “ like that of the *Arabs*, relating to the moon,  
 “ and consisting of *twenty-seven* equal parts, by  
 “ which they can tell very nearly the hour of  
 “ the night; another relating to the sun, and,  
 “ like ours, containing twelve signs, to which  
 B b “ they

“ they have given as many names, correspond-  
“ ing with those which we have borrowed  
“ from the *Greeks*.” All that is true ; but he  
adds : “ It is highly probable that they received  
“ them at some time or another by the inter-  
“ vention of the *Arabs* ; for no man, surely,  
“ can persuade himself, that it is the ancient  
“ division of the Zodiack formed, according  
“ to some authors, by the forefathers of man-  
“ kind, and still preserved among the *Hindus*.”  
Now I undertake to prove, that the *Indian* Zo-  
diack was not borrowed mediately or directly  
from the *Arabs* or *Greeks* ; and since the solar  
division of it in *India* is the same in substance  
with that used in *Greece*, we may reasonably  
conclude, that both *Greeks* and *Hindus* received  
it from an older nation, who first gave names to  
the luminaries of heaven, and from whom both  
*Greeks* and *Hindus*, as their similarity in lan-  
guage and religion fully evinces, had a common  
descent.

THE same writer afterwards intimates, that  
“ the time when *Indian* Astronomy received  
“ its most considerable improvement, from  
“ which it has now, as he imagines, wholly  
“ declined, was either the age when the  
“ *Arabs*, who established themselves in *Per-  
sia*  
“ and *Sogdiana*, had a great intercourse with  
“ the *Hindus*, or that when the successors of  
“ CHENGIZ

“ CHENGIZ united both *Arabs* and *Hindus* under one vast dominion.” It is not the object of this essay to correct the historical errors in the passage last cited, nor to defend the astronomers of *India* from the charge of gross ignorance in regard to the figure of the earth and the distances of the heavenly bodies ; a charge, which MONTUELA very boldly makes on the authority, I believe, of Father SOUCIET : I will only remark, that, in our conversations with the *Pandits*, we must never confound the system of the *Jyautishikas*, or mathematical astronomers, with that of the *Paurānics*, or poetical fabulists ; for to such a confusion alone must we impute the many mistakes of *Europeans* on the subject of *Indian* science. A venerable mathematician of this province, named RA'MACHANDRA, now in his eightieth year, visited me lately at *Crisbhanagar*, and part of his discourse was so applicable to the inquiries which I was then making, that, as soon as he left me, I committed it to writing. “ The *Paurānics*, he said, will tell you, that our earth is a plane figure studded with eight mountains, and surrounded by seven seas of milk, nectar, and other fluids ; that the part which we inhabit, is one of seven islands, to which eleven smaller isles are subordinate ; that a God, riding on a huge *elephant*, guards each of the eight regions ; and that a mountain of

“ gold rises and gleams in the centre ; but we  
 “ believe the earth to be shaped like a *Cadamba*  
 “ fruit, or spheroidal, and admit only four  
 “ oceans of salt water, all which we name from  
 “ the four cardinal points, and in which are  
 “ many great peninsulas with innumerable  
 “ islands : they will tell you, that a dragon’s  
 “ head swallows the moon, and thus causes an  
 “ eclipse ; but we know, that the supposed  
 “ head and tail of the dragon mean only the  
 “ nodes, or points formed by intersections of the  
 “ ecliptick and the moon’s orbit ; in short,  
 “ they have imagined a system which exists  
 “ only in their fancy ; but we consider nothing  
 “ as true without such evidence as cannot be  
 “ questioned.” I could not perfectly under-  
 stand the old Gymnosophilist, when he told me,  
 that the *Rāśichakra*, or *Circle of Signs* (for so he  
 called the *Zodiack*), was like a *Dhustāra* flower ;  
 meaning the *Datura*, to which the *Sansevit*  
 name has been softened, and the flower of  
 which is conical, or shaped like a funnel : at first  
 I thought, that he alluded to a projection of the  
 hemisphere on the plane of the colure, and to  
 the angle formed by the ecliptick and equator ;  
 but a younger astronomer named *VINA VACA*,  
 who came afterwards to see me, assured me  
 that they meant only the circular mouth of  
 the funnel, or the base of the cone, and that it  
 was



was usual among their ancient writers to borrow from fruits and flowers their appellations of several plane and solid figures.

FROM the two *Bráhmans* whom I have just named, I learned the following curious particulars; and you may depend on my accuracy in repeating them, since I wrote them in their presence, and corrected what I had written, till they pronounced it perfect.

THEY divide a great circle, as we do, into three hundred and sixty degrees, called by them *ansas* or portions; of which they, like us, allot thirty to each of the twelve signs in this order:

|                               |                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Mishá</i> , the Ram.       | <i>Tulá</i> , the Balance.           |
| <i>Vrishá</i> , the Bull.     | 8. <i>Vrishchika</i> , the Scorpion. |
| <i>Mit'huna</i> , the Pair.   | <i>Dhanu</i> , the Bow.              |
| 4. <i>Carcata</i> , the Crab. | <i>Macara</i> , the Sea-Monster.     |
| <i>Sirha</i> , the Lion.      | <i>Cumbha</i> , the Ewer.            |
| <i>Canyá</i> , the Virgin.    | 12. <i>Mina</i> , the Fish.          |

THE figures of the twelve asterisms, thus denominated with respect to the sun, are specified by *SRI'PETI*, author of the *Retnamála*, in *Sanferit* verses; which I produce, as my vouchers, in the original, with a verbal translation:

*Mēshādayō nāma samānirūpī,*  
*Vīnāgadādhyam mīt'hunam nriyugmam,*  
*Pradīpasasyē dadhati carābhyaṁ*  
*Nāvi st'hita vāriṇi canyasaiva.*  
*Tulā tulābhrit pretimānapānir*  
*Dhanur dhanushmān hayawat parāṅgah,*

Mrigānamah syān macarō't'ha cumbhah  
 Scandhē nerō ric'agha'tam dadhānah,  
 Anyanyapuchch'hābbimuc'hō hi mīnah  
 Matsyadwayam swast'halachārinōmī.

“ THE *ram*, *bull*, *crab*, *lion*, and *scorpion*,  
 “ have the figures of those five animals respec-  
 “ tively : the *pair* are a damsel playing on a  
 “ *Vind* and a youth wielding a mace : the *vir-*  
 “ *gin* stands on a boat in water, holding in one  
 “ hand a lamp, in the other an ear of ricecorn :  
 “ the *balance* is held by a weigher with a  
 “ weight in one hand : the *bow*, by an archer,  
 “ whose hinder parts are like those of a horse :  
 “ the *sea-monster* has the face of an antelope :  
 “ the *ewer* is a waterpot borne on the shoulder  
 “ of a man, who empties it : the *fish* are two,  
 “ with their heads turned to each other's tails ;  
 “ and all these are supposed to be in such places  
 “ as suit their several natures.”

To each of the *twenty-seven* lunar stations,  
 which they call *nakshatras*, they allow thirteen  
*ansas* and one third, or *thirteen degrees twenty*  
*minutes* ; and their names appear in the order of  
 the signs, but without any regard to the figures  
 of them :

|                    |                   |                          |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Asvinī.</i>     | <i>A'rdrā.</i>    | <i>Pūrva p'halgunī.</i>  |
| <i>Bharani.</i>    | <i>Punarvasu.</i> | <i>Uttara p'halgunī.</i> |
| <i>Krittikā.</i>   | <i>Puṣya.</i>     | <i>Haṣṭa.</i>            |
| <i>Rohini.</i>     | <i>ṣ. Aślīṣā.</i> | <i>Chitrā.</i>           |
| <i>Mṛigashīrā.</i> | <i>Māghā.</i>     | <i>Swatī.</i>            |

|                         |                        |                          |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Viśāc' bhā.</i>      | <i>Pūrvāṣṭhā' dbā.</i> | <i>Satabhiṣṭhā.</i>      |
| <i>Anurādhā.</i>        | <i>Uttarāṣṭhādhā.</i>  | <i>Pūrva bhadrāpadā.</i> |
| 18. <i>Jyēṣṭhā' bhā</i> | <i>Śravanā.</i>        | <i>Uttarabhadrapadā.</i> |
| <i>Mūla.</i>            | <i>Dhanisṭhā.</i>      | 27. <i>Révatī.</i>       |

BETWEEN the twenty-first and twenty-second constellations, we find in the plate three stars called *Abhijit*; but they are the last quarter of the asterism immediately preceding, or the latter *Aṣṭar*, as the word is commonly pronounced. A complete revolution of the moon, with respect to the stars, being made in twenty-seven days, odd hours, minutes, and seconds, and perfect exactness being either not attained by the *Hindus*, or not required by them, they fixed on the number twenty-seven, and inserted *Abhijit* for some astrological purpose in their nuptial ceremonies. The drawing, from which the plate was engraved \*, seems intended to represent the figures of the twenty-seven constellations, together with *Abhijit*, as they are described in three stanzas by the author of the *Retnamālā*:

1. *Turagamuc'haśadricṣam yōnirūpam cśhurābham,*  
*Sac'aśamam at'hainasyōttamāṅgēna tulyam,*  
*Manigrihasara chacrābhāni sālōpamam bhūm,*  
*Sayanafadrisamanyachchātra paryancarūpam.*
2. *Hastācārayutam cha mauṭicāśamam*  
*chānyat pravālōpamam,*  
*Dhriṣṭhyam tōrana sannibham balinibham,*  
*śatcundalābham param;*

\* The different compartments of the plate alluded to, are so minutely described in the subsequent page, that it is thought unnecessary to annex it.

Cruḥhyatcéfarivicraména sadrisam,

sayyāsamānam param,

Anyad dentivilāsavat ś'hitamatah

sringātacavyacti bham.

3. Trivicramābham cha mridangarūpam,

Vrittam tatōnyadyamalābhwayābham,

Paryancanīpam murajānucāram,

Ityēvam aswādibhachacrarūpam.

“ A HORSE's head ; *yōni* or *bhaga* ; a razor ;  
 “ a wheeled carriage ; the head of an antelope ;  
 “ a gem ; a house ; an arrow ; a wheel ; an-  
 “ other house ; a bedstead ; another bedstead ;  
 “ a hand ; a pearl ; a piece of coral ; a fes-  
 “ toon of leaves ; an oblation to the Gods ; a  
 “ rich ear-ring ; the tail of a fierce lion ; a  
 “ couch ; the tooth of a wanton elephant,  
 “ near which is the kernel of the *sringāta*  
 “ nut ; the three footsteps of *VISHNU* ; a ta-  
 “ bor ; a circular jewel ; a two-faced image ;  
 “ another couch ; and a smaller sort of tabor :  
 “ such are the figures of *Aśvinī* and the rest in  
 “ the circle of lunar constellations.”

THE *Hindu* draughtsman has very ill repre-  
 sented most of the figures ; and he has trans-  
 posed the two *Aśvāras* as well as the two *Bha-*  
*drapads* ; but his figure of *Abhijit*, which looks  
 like our ace of hearts, has a resemblance to the  
 kernel of the *trapa*, a curious water-plant de-  
 scribed in a separate essay. In another *Sanscrit*  
 book the figures of the same constellations are  
 thus varied :

A horse's



|                               |                    |                        |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| A horse's head.               | A straight tail.   | A conch.               |
| <i>Yoni</i> or <i>bhaga</i> . | Two stars S. to N. | A winnowing fan.       |
| A flame.                      | Two, N. to S.      | Another.               |
| A waggon.                     | A hand.            | An arrow.              |
| A cat's paw.                  | A pearl.           | A tabor.               |
| One bright star.              | Red saffron.       | A circle of stars.     |
| A bow.                        | A festoon.         | A staff for burdens.   |
| A child's pencil.             | A snake.           | The beam of a balance. |
| 9. A dog's tail.              | 18. A boar's head. | 27. A fish.            |

FROM twelve of the asterisms just enumerated are derived the names of the twelve *Indian* months in the usual form of patronymicks; for the *Paurānics*, who reduce all nature to a system of emblematical mythology, suppose a celestial nymph to preside over each of the constellations, and feign that the God *So'MA*, or *Lunus*, having wedded twelve of them, became the father of twelve *Genii*, or months, who are named after their several mothers; but the *Jyautishicas* assert, that, when their lunar year was arranged by former astronomers, the moon was at the full in each month on the very day when it entered the *nacshatra*, from which that month is denominated. The manner in which the derivatives are formed, will best appear by a comparison of the months with their several constellations:

|              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| A'swina.     | 4. Pausha. |
| Cārtica.     | Māgha.     |
| Mārgasīrsha. | P'hālguna. |
|              | Chaitra.   |

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| Chaitra.      | A'shára.    |
| 8. Vaishá'ha. | Śrávana.    |
| Jyaisht'ha.   | 12. Bhádra. |

THE third month is also called *A'grabhāyana* (whence the common word *Agran* is corrupted) from another name of *Mrigasiras*.

NOTHING can be more ingenious than the memorial verses, in which the *Hindus* have a custom of linking together a number of ideas otherwise unconnected, and of chaining, as it were, the memory by a regular measure : thus by putting *teeth* for thirty-two, *Rudra* for eleven, *season* for six, *arrow* or *element* for five, *ocean*, *Vēda*, or *age*, for four, RA'MA, *fire*, or *quality*, for three, *eye*, or CUMA'RA, for two, and *earth* or *moon* for one, they have composed four lines, which express the number of stars in each of the twenty-seven asterisms :

Vahni tri ritwīshu gunēndu critāgnibhūta,  
 Bānāswinētra sara bhūcu'yugābhirāmāh,  
 Rudrābhirāmāgunavēdasatā dwiyugma,  
 Dantā budhairābhīhitāh cramasō bhatārāh.

THAT is : “ three, three, six ; five, three,  
 “ one ; four, three, five ; five, two, two ;  
 “ five, one, one ; four, four, three ; eleven,  
 “ four and three ; three, four, a hundred ; two,  
 “ two, thirty-two : thus have the stars of the  
 “ lunar constellations, in order as they appear,  
 “ been numbered by the wise.”

If the stanza was correctly repeated to me, the *two Asbárás* are considered as one asterism, and *Abhijit* as three separate stars; but I suspect an error in the third line, because *dwibána*, or *two and five*, would suit the metre as well as *bábiráma*; and because there were only three *Véda's* in the early age, when, it is probable, the stars were enumerated and the technical verse composed.

Two lunar stations, or *mansions*, and a quarter are co-extensive, we see, with one sign; and nine stations correspond with four signs: by counting, therefore, thirteen degrees and twenty minutes from the first star in the head of the Ram, inclusively, we find the whole extent of *Aswiní*, and shall be able to ascertain the other stars with sufficient accuracy: but first let us exhibit a comparative table of both *Zodiacks*, denoting the mansions, as in the *Váránes* almanack, by the first letters or syllables of their names:

MONTHS.

| MONTHS.    | SOLAR<br>ASTERISMS. | MANSIONS.  |
|------------|---------------------|--|
| A'swin     | Mésh                | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} A + bh + \frac{e}{4} \\ \frac{3c}{4} + r\bar{o} + \frac{M}{4} \\ \frac{M}{4} + \hat{a} + \frac{3p}{4} \\ \frac{p}{4} + p + sl. 9. \end{array} \right.$                               |
| Cártic     | Vriřh               |  |
| A'graháyan | Mit'hun             |  |
| Paush      | Carcát 4.           |  |
| Mágh       | Sinh                | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} m + PU + \frac{u}{4} \\ \frac{3u}{4} + li + \frac{ch}{4} \\ \frac{ch}{4} + s + \frac{3v}{4} \\ \frac{v}{4} + a + j 18. \end{array} \right.$  |
| P'hálgun   | Canya               |  |
| Chaitr     | Tulà                |  |
| Vaifac'h   | Vriřchic 8.         |  |
| Jaish't'h  | Dhan                | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} m\acute{u} + p\bar{u} + \frac{v}{4} \\ \frac{3v}{4} + S + \frac{dh}{4} \\ \frac{dh}{4} + s + \frac{3\bar{p}\bar{d}}{4} \\ \frac{\bar{p}\bar{d}}{4} + u + r. 27. \end{array} \right.$ |
| A'řhár     | Macar               |  |
| Srávan     | Cumbh               |  |
| Bhádr      | Mín 12.             |  |

HENCE we may readily know the stars in each mansion, as they follow in order :

| LUNAR<br>MANSIONS. | SOLAR<br>ASTERISMS. | STARS.  |
|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| Ařwiní.            | Ram.                | Three, in and near the head.                            |
| Bharaní.           | —                   | Three, in the tail.                                     |
| Críticà,           | Bull.               | Six, of the Pleiads.                                    |
| Róhiní.            | —                   | Five, in the head and neck.                             |
| Mrigařiras.        | Pair.               | { Three, in or near the feet,<br>perhaps in the Galaxy. |
| A'řdra.            | —                   | One, on the knee.                                       |

LUNAR



| LUNAR<br>MANSIONS. | SOLAR<br>ASTERISMS. | STARS.  |
|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| Punarvasu.         | —                   | { Four, in the head, breast, and<br>shoulder. |
| Pushya.            | Crab                | Three, in the body and claws.                 |
| Aslêshâ.           | Lion                | Five, in the face and mane.                   |
| Maghâ.             | —                   | Five, in the leg and haunch.                  |
| Pûrvap'halguni.    | —                   | Two; one in the tail.                         |
| Uttarap'halguni.   | Virgin              | Two, on the arm and zone.                     |
| Hastâ.             | —                   | Five, near the hand.                          |
| Chitrâ.            | —                   | One, in the spike.                            |
| Swâtî.             | Balance             | One, in the N. Scale.                         |
| Visâc'hâ.          | —                   | Four, beyond it.                              |
| Anurâdhâ.          | Scorpion            | Four, in the body.                            |
| Jyêst'hâ.          | —                   | Three, in the tail.                           |
| Mûla.              | Bow                 | { Eleven, to the point of the<br>arrow.       |
| Pûrvâshâra.        | —                   | Two, in the leg.                              |
| Uttarâshâra.       | Sea-monster.        | Two, in the horn.                             |
| Shravanâ.          | —                   | Three, in the tail.                           |
| Dhanîsh'tâ.        | Ewer                | Four, in the arm.                             |
| Satabhishâ.        | —                   | Many, in the stream.                          |
| Pûrvabhadrapadâ.   | Fish                | Two, in the first fish.                       |
| Uttarabhadrapadâ.  | —                   | Two, in the cord.                             |
| Rêvatî.            | —                   | { Thirty-two, in the second<br>fish and cord. |

WHEREVER the *Indian* drawing differs from the memorial verse in the *Retnamâlâ*, I have preferred the authority of the writer to that of the painter, who has drawn some terrestrial things with so little similitude, that we must not implicitly rely on his representation of objects merely celestial: he seems particularly to have erred in the stars of *Dhanîsh'tâ*.

FOR

For the assistance of those who may be inclined to re-examine the twenty-seven constellations with a chart before them, I subjoin a table of the degrees to which the *nacshatras* extend respectively, from the first star in the asterism of *Aries*, which we now see near the beginning of the sign *Taurus*, as it was placed in the ancient sphere.

| N.    | D.    | M.   | N.     | D.    | M.   | N.     | D.    | M.   |
|-------|-------|------|--------|-------|------|--------|-------|------|
| I.    | 13°.  | 20'. | X.     | 133°. | 20'. | XIX.   | 253°. | 20'. |
| II.   | 26°.  | 40'. | XI.    | 146°. | 40'. | XX.    | 266°. | 40'. |
| III.  | 40°.  | 0'.  | XII.   | 160°. | 0'.  | XXI.   | 280°. | 0'.  |
| IV.   | 53°.  | 20'. | XIII.  | 173°. | 20'. | XXII.  | 293°. | 20'. |
| V.    | 66°.  | 40'. | XIV.   | 186°. | 40'. | XXIII. | 306°. | 40'. |
| VI.   | 80°.  | 0'.  | XV.    | 200°. | 0'.  | XXIV.  | 320°. | 0'.  |
| VII.  | 93°.  | 20'. | XVI.   | 213°. | 20'. | XXV.   | 333°. | 20'. |
| VIII. | 106°. | 40'. | XVII.  | 226°. | 40'. | XXVI.  | 346°. | 40'. |
| IX.   | 120°. | 0'.  | XVIII. | 240°. | 0'.  | XXVII. | 360°. | 0'.  |

The asterisms of the *first* column are in the signs of *Taurus*, *Gemini*, *Cancer*, *Leo*; those of the *second*, in *Virgo*, *Libra*, *Scorpio*, *Sagittarius*; and those of the *third*, in *Capricornus*, *Aquarius*, *Pisces*, *Aries*: we cannot err much, therefore, in any series of *three* constellations; for, by counting 13° 20' forwards and backwards, we find the spaces occupied by the two extremes, and the intermediate space belongs of course to the middle-most. It is not meant, that the division of the *Hindu* Zodiac into such spaces is exact to a minute, or that *every* star of each asterism must necessarily be found

found in the space to which it belongs; but the computation will be accurate enough for our purpose, and no lunar mansion can be very remote from the path of the moon: how Father SOUCIET could dream, that *Vifac'hà* was in the Northern Crown, I can hardly comprehend; but it surpasses all comprehension, that M. BAILLY should copy his dream, and give reasons to support it; especially as four stars, arranged pretty much like those in the *Indian* figure, present themselves obviously near *the Balance* or *the Scorpion*. I have not the boldness to exhibit the individual stars in each mansion, distinguished in BAYER's method by *Greek* letters; because, though I have little doubt, that the five stars of *Ashlèshà*, in the form of a wheel, are  $\gamma, \eta, \zeta, \mu, \iota$ , of *the Lion*, and those of *Mûla*,  $\gamma, \iota, \delta, \zeta, \phi, \tau, \sigma, \nu, \kappa, \xi, \pi$ , of *the Sagittary*, and though I think many of the others equally clear, yet, where the number of stars in a mansion is less than three, or even than four, it is not easy to fix on them with confidence; and I must wait, until some young *Hindu* astronomer, with a good memory and good eyes, can attend my leisure on serene nights at the proper seasons, to point out in the firmament itself the several stars of all the constellations, for which he can find names in the *Sanserit* language: the only stars, except those in the

*Zodiack,*

*Zodiack*, that have yet been distinctly named to me, are the *Septarshi*, *Dhruva*, *Arundhati*, *Vish-nupad*, *Mátrimandel*, and, in the southern hemisphere, *Agastya*, or *Canopus*. The twenty-seven *Yoga* stars, indeed, have particular names, in the order of the *nacshatras*, to which they belong: and since we learn, that the *Hindus* have determined the latitude, longitude, and right ascension of each, it might be useful to exhibit the list of them; but at present I can only subjoin the names of twenty-seven *Yogas*, or divisions of the *Ecliptick*.

|                    |                   |                    |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Vishcambha,</i> | <i>Ganda.</i>     | <i>Parigba.</i>    |
| <i>Priti.</i>      | <i>Vridhbi.</i>   | <i>Siva.</i>       |
| <i>Ayushmat.</i>   | <i>Dhruva.</i>    | <i>Siddha.</i>     |
| <i>Saubhágya,</i>  | <i>Vyaghata.</i>  | <i>Sudhya.</i>     |
| <i>Sobhana.</i>    | <i>Herishana.</i> | <i>Subha.</i>      |
| <i>Atiganda.</i>   | <i>Vajra.</i>     | <i>Sucra.</i>      |
| <i>Sucarman.</i>   | <i>Asrij.</i>     | <i>Brahman.</i>    |
| <i>Dhriti.</i>     | <i>Vyatipata.</i> | <i>Indra.</i>      |
| <i>Sula.</i>       | <i>Variyas.</i>   | <i>Vaidbiriti.</i> |

HAVING shown in what manner the *Hindus* arrange the *Zodiacal* stars with respect to the sun and moon, let us proceed to our principal subject, *the antiquity of that double arrangement*. In the first place, the *Bráhmans* were always too proud to borrow their science from the *Greeks*, *Arabs*, *Moguls*, or any nation of *Mléchch'bas*,



as they call those who are ignorant of the *Védas*, and have not studied the language of the Gods: they have often repeated to me the fragment of an old verse, which they now use proverbially, *na nlebhò yavanótparab*, or *no base creature can be lower than a Yavan*; by which name they formerly meant an *Ionian* or *Greek*, and now mean a *Mogul*, or, generally, a *Muselman*. When I mentioned to different *Pandits*, at several times and in several places, the opinion of MONTUCLA, they could not prevail on themselves to oppose it by serious argument; but some laughed heartily; others, with a sarcastick smile, said it was a *pleasant imagination*; and all seemed to think it a notion bordering on phrensy. In fact, although the figures of the twelve *Indian Signs* bear a wonderful resemblance to those of the *Grecian*, yet they are too much varied for a mere copy, and the nature of the variation proves them to be original: nor is the resemblance more extraordinary than that which has often been observed between our *Gothick* days of the week and those of the *Hindus*, which are dedicated to the same luminaries, and (what is yet more singular) revolve in the same order: *Ravi*, the Sun; *Sîma*, the Moon; *Mangala*, *Tuiscó*; *Budba*, *Woden*; *Vrihaspati*, *Thor*; *Suera*, *Freya*; *Sani*, *Sater*; yet no man ever imagined, that the

*Indians* borrowed so remarkable an arrangement from the *Goths* or *Germans*. On the planets I will only observe, that *SUCRA*, the regent of *Venus*, is, like all the rest, a *male* deity, named also *USANAS*, and believed to be a sage of infinite learning; but *ZOHRAH*, the *NA'HI'D* of the *Persians*, is a goddess like the *FREYA* of our *Saxon* progenitors; the drawing, therefore, of the planets which was brought into *Bengal* by Mr. *JOHNSON*, relates to the *Persian* system, and represents the *Genii* supposed to preside over them, exactly as they are described by the poet *HA'TIFI*: “ He bedecked the firmament  
 “ with stars, and ennobled this earth with the  
 “ race of men; he gently turned the auspicious new moon of the festival, like a bright  
 “ jewel, round the angle of the sky; he placed  
 “ the *Hindu SATURN* on the seat of that restive  
 “ elephant, the revolving sphere, and put the  
 “ rainbow into his hand, as a hook to coerce  
 “ the intoxicated beast; he made silken strings  
 “ of sun-beams for the lute of *VENUS*; and  
 “ presented *JUPITER*, who saw the felicity of  
 “ true religion, with a rosary of clustering  
 “ *Pleiads*. The bow of the sky became that  
 “ of *MARS*, when he was honoured with the  
 “ command of the celestial host; for God  
 “ conferred sovereignty on the Sun, and squadrons of stars were his army.”

THE

THE names and forms of the lunar constellations, especially of *Bharani* and *Abhijit*, indicate a simplicity of manners peculiar to an ancient people; and they differ entirely from those of the *Arabian* system, in which the very first asterism appears in the dual number, because it consists only of two stars. *Menzil*, or *the place of alighting*, properly signifies a *station* or *stage*, and thence is used for an ordinary day's *journey*; and that idea seems better applied than *mansion* to so incessant a traveller as the Moon. The *menázilu'l kamar*, or *lunar stages*, of the *Arabs* have *twenty-eight* names in the following order, the particle *al* being understood before every word:

|            |            |             |            |
|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Sharatán.  | Nathrah.   | Ghafr.      | Dháhih.    |
| Bu tain.   | Tarf.      | Zubániyah.  | Buláá.     |
| Thurayyá.  | Jabthah.   | Iellil.     | Suúid.     |
| Debarán.   | Zubrah.    | Kalb.       | Akhbiya.   |
| Hakáah.    | Sarfah.    | Shaulah.    | Mukdim.    |
| Hanáah.    | Awwá.      | Nááim.      | Múkhir.    |
| 7. Dhiráá. | 14. Simác. | 21. Beldah. | 28. Rishá. |

Now, if we can trust the *Arabian* lexicographers, the number of stars in their several *menzils* rarely agrees with those of the *Indians*; and two such nations must naturally have observed, and might naturally have named, the principal stars, near which the moon passes in the course of each day, without any communi-

cation on the subject: there is no evidence, indeed, of a communication between the *Hindus* and *Arabs* on any subject of literature or science; for though we have reason to believe, that a commercial intercourse subsisted in very early times between *Yemen* and the western coast of *India*, yet the *Brāhmans*, who alone are permitted to read the six *Vēdāngas*, one of which is the astronomical *Sāstra*, were not then commercial, and, most probably, neither could nor would have conversed with *Arabian* merchants. The hostile irruption of the *Arabs* into *Hindustān*, in the eighth century, and that of the *Moguls* under CHENGIZ, in the thirteenth, were not likely to change the astronomical system of the *Hindus*: but the supposed consequences of *modern* revolutions are out of the question; for, if any historical records be true, we know with as positive certainty, that AMARSINH and CA'LIDA's composed their works before the birth of CHRIST, as that MENANDER and TERENCE wrote before that important epoch: now the twelve *signs* and twenty-seven *mansions* are mentioned, by the several names before exhibited, in a *Sanscrit* vocabulary by the first of those *Indian* authors, and the second of them frequently alludes to *Rābini* and the rest by name in his *Fatal Ring*, his *Children of the Sun*, and his *Birth of CUMA'RA*; from which poem

I pro-



I produce two lines, that my evidence may not seem to be collected from mere conversation :

Maitrè muhúrtè sasaláneh'hanéna,  
Yógam gatáfúttarap'halganíshu.

“ When the stars of *Uttarap'halgun* had  
“ joined in a fortunate hour the faun-spotted  
“ moon.”

THIS testimony being decisive against the conjecture of M. MONTUCLA, I need not urge the great antiquity of MEND's Institutes, in which the twenty-seven asterisms are called the daughters of DÁCSHA and the consorts of SO'MA, or the Moon, nor rely on the testimony of the *Bráhmans*, who assure me with one voice, that the names of the *Zodiacal* stars occur in the *Védas*; three of which I firmly believe, from internal and external evidence, to be more than *three thousand* years old.

HAVING therefore proved what I engaged to prove, I will close my essay with a general observation. The result of NEWTON's researches into the history of the primitive sphere was, “ that  
“ the practice of observing the stars began in  
“ *Egypt* in the days of AMMON, and was  
“ propagated thence by conquest in the reign  
“ of his son SISAC, into *Afric*, *Europe* and  
“ *Asia*; since which time ATLAS formed the

“ sphere of the *Lybians*; CHIRON that of the  
“ *Greeks*; and the *Chaldeans* a sphere of their  
“ own.” Now I hope, on some other oc-  
casions, to satisfy the publick, as I have per-  
fectly satisfied myself, that “ the practice of  
“ observing the stars began, with the rudi-  
“ ments of civil society, in the country of  
“ those whom we call *Chaldeans*; from which  
“ it was propagated into *Egypt, India, Greece,*  
“ *Italy, and Scandinavia*, before the reign of  
“ SISAC or SA'C'YA, who by conquest spread a  
“ new system of religion and philosophy from  
“ the *Nile* to the *Ganges*, about a thousand  
“ years before CHRIST; but that CHIRON and  
“ ATLAS were allegorical or mythological  
“ personages, and ought to have no place in  
“ the serious history of our species.”

## DISSERTATION XIV.

THE  
 DESIGN OF A TREATISE  
 ON THE  
 PLANTS OF INDIA.

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THE greatest, if not the only, obstacle to the progress of knowledge in these provinces, except in those branches of it which belong immediately to our several professions, is our want of leisure for general researches; and, as ARCHIMEDES, who was happily master of his time, had not space enough to move the greatest weight with the smallest force, thus we, who have ample space for our inquiries, really want *time* for the pursuit of them. "Give me a place to stand on, said the great mathematician, and I will move the whole earth:" Give us *time*, we may say, *for our investigations, and we will transfer to Europe all the sciences, arts, and literature of Asia.* "Not to have despaired," however, was

thought a degree of merit in the *Roman* general, even though he was defeated; and, having some hope, that others may occasionally find more leisure, than it will ever, at least in this country, be my lot to enjoy, I take the liberty to propose a work, from which very curious information, and possibly very solid advantage, may be derived.

SOME hundreds of plants, which are yet imperfectly known to *European* botanists, and with the virtues of which they are wholly unacquainted, grow wild on the plains and in the forests of *India*: the *Amarcôsh*, an excellent vocabulary of the *Sanserit* language, contains in one chapter the names of about three hundred medicinal vegetables; the *Médim* may comprise many more; and the *Dravyébbhidhana*, or *Dictionary of Natural Productions*, includes, I believe, a far greater number; the properties of which are distinctly related in medical tracts of approved authority. Now the first step, in compiling a treatise on the plants of *India*, should be to write their true names in *Roman* letters, according to the most accurate orthography, and in *Sanserit* preferably to any vulgar dialect; because a learned language is fixed in books, while popular idioms are in constant fluctuation, and will not, perhaps, be understood a century hence by the inhabitants of these



these *Indian* territories, whom future botanists may consult on the common appellations of trees and flowers. The childish denominations of plants from the persons who first described them, ought wholly to be rejected; for *Champaca* and *Hinna* seem to me not only more elegant, but far properer, designations of an *Indian* and an *Arabian* plant, than *Michelia* and *Lawsonia*; nor can I see without pain, that the great *Swedish* botanist considered it as *the supreme and only reward of labour* in this part of natural history, to preserve a name by hanging it on a blossom, and that he declared this mode of promoting and adorning botany worthy of being *continued with holy reverence*; though so high an honour, he says, *ought to be conferred with chaste reserve, and not prostituted for the purpose of conciliating the good will, or eternizing the memory, of any but his chosen followers; no, not even of saints.* His list of *an hundred and fifty* such names clearly shews, that his excellent works are the true basis of his just celebrity, which would have been feebly supported by the stalk of the *Linnaea*. From what proper name the *Plantain* is called *Musa*, I do not know; but it seems to be the *Dutch* pronunciation of the *Arabick* word for that vegetable, and ought not, therefore, to have appeared in his list, though, in my opinion,

nion, it is the only rational name in the muster-roll. As to the system of LINNÆUS, it is the system of Nature, subordinate indeed to the beautiful arrangement of *natural orders*, of which he has given a rough sketch, and which may hereafter, perhaps, be completed: but the distribution of vegetables into *classes*, according to the number, length, and position of the stamens and pistils, and of those *classes* into *kinds* and *species*, according to certain marks of discrimination, will ever be found the clearest and most convenient of methods, and should therefore be studiously observed in the work which I now suggest. But I must be forgiven, if I propose to reject the *Linnean* appellations of the twenty-four *classes*, because, although they appear to be *Greek* (and, if they really were so, that alone might be thought a sufficient objection), yet in truth they are not *Greek*, nor even formed by analogy to the language of *Grecians*; for *Polygamos*, *Monandros*, and the rest of that form, are both masculine and feminine; *Polyandria*, in the abstract, never occurs, and *Polyandria* means a publick cemetery; *Diœcia* and *Diœcus* are not found in books of authority; nor, if they were, would they be derived from *dis*, but from *dia*, which would include the *Triœcia*: let me add, that the *twelfth* and *thirteenth* classes are ill distinguished by  
their

their appellations, independently of other exceptions to them, since the real distinction between them consists not so much in the number of their stamens, as in the *place* where they are inserted; and that the *fourteenth* and *fifteenth* are not more accurately discriminated by two words formed in defiance of grammatical analogy, since there are but *two* powers, or *two diversities of length*, in each of those classes. *Calycopolyandras* might, perhaps, not inaccurately denote a flower of the *twelfth* class; but such a compound would still favour of barbarism or pedantry; and the best way to amend such a system of words is to efface it, and supply its place by a more simple nomenclature, which may easily be found. Numerals may be used for the *eleven* first classes, the former of two numbers being always appropriated to the *stamens*, and the latter to the *pistils*: short phrases, as, *on the calyx or calice, in the receptacle, two long, four long, from one base, from two, or many, bases, with anthers connected, on the pistils, in two flowers, in two distinct plants, mixed, concealed, or the like*, will answer every purpose of discrimination; but I do not offer this as a perfect substitute for the words which I condemn. The allegory of *sexes* and *nuptials*, even if it were complete, ought, I think, to be discarded, as unbecoming the gravity of men,



men, who, while they search for truth, have no business to inflame their imaginations ; and, while they profess to give descriptions, have nothing to do with metaphors : few passages in *Aloisia*, the most impudent book ever composed by man, are more wantonly indecent than the hundred-forty-sixth number of the *Botanical Philosophy*, and the broad comment of its grave author, who *dares*, like OCTAVIUS in his epigram, *to speak with Roman simplicity* ; nor can the *Linneæan* description of the *Arum*, and many other plants, be read in *English* without exciting ideas, which the occasion does not require. Hence it is, that no well-born and well-educated woman can be advised to amuse herself with botany, as it is now explained, though a more elegant and delightful study, or one more likely to assist and embellish other female accomplishments, could not possibly be recommended.

WHEN the *Sanfrit* names of the *Indian* plants have been correctly written in a large paper-book, one page being appropriated to each, the fresh plants themselves, procured in their respective seasons, must be concisely, but accurately, *classed* and *described* ; after which their several uses in medicine, diet, or manufactures, may be collected, with the assistance of *Hindu* physicians, from the medical books in  
*Sanfrit,*



*Sanscrit*, and their accounts either disproved or established by repeated experiments, as fast as they can be made with exactness.

By way of example, I annex the descriptions of five *Indian* plants, but am unable, at this season, to re-examine them, and wholly despair of leisure to exhibit others, of which I have collected the names, and most of which I have seen in blossom.

## I. MUCHUCUNDA.

Twenty, from One Base.

*Cal.* Five-parted, thick; leaflets, oblong.

*Cor.* Five petals, oblong.

*Stam.* From twelve to fifteen, rather long, fertile; five shorter, sterile. In some flowers, the *unprolific* stamens, longer.

*Pist.* Style cylindrick.

*Peric.* A capsule, with five cells, many-seeded.

*Seeds:* Roundish, compressed, winged.

*Leaves:* Of many different shapes.

*Uses:* The quality, refrigerant.

ONE flower, steeped a whole night in a glass of water, forms a cooling mucilage of use in virulent gonorrhœas. The *Muchucunda*, called also *Pichuca*, is exquisitely fragrant: its calyx is covered with an odoriferous dust; and the dried

dried flowers in fine powder, taken like snuff, are said, in a *Sanscrit* book, almost instantaneously to remove a nervous head-ach.

*Note.* This plant differs a little from the *Pentapetes* of LINNÆUS.

## II. BILVA OR MA'LU'RA.

Many on the Receptacle, and One.

*Cal.* Four, or five, cleft, beneath.

*Cor.* Four, or five, petals; mostly reflex.

*Stam.* Forty, to forty-eight, filaments; anthers, mostly erect.

*Pist.* Germ, roundish; *Style*, smooth, short; *Stigma*, clubbed.

*Peric.* A spheroidal berry, very large; many-seeded.

*Seeds:* Toward the surface, ovate, in a pellucid mucus.

*Leaves:* Ternate; common petiole, long; leaflets, subovate; obtusely notched, with short petioles; some almost lanced.

*Stem:* Armed with sharp thorns.

*Uses:* The fruit nutritious, warm, cathartic; in taste, delicious; in fragrance, exquisite: its aperient and detensive quality, and its efficacy in removing habitual costiveness, have been proved by constant experience. The mucus of the seed is, for some purposes, a very good cement.

*Note.*

*Note.* This fruit is called *Srip'hala*, because it sprang, say the *Indian* poets, from the milk of *Sri*, the goddess of abundance, who bestowed it on mankind at the request of *ISWARA*, whence he alone wears a chaplet of *Bilva* flowers; to him only the *Hindus* offer them; and, when they see any of them fallen on the ground, they take them up with reverence, and carry them to his temple. From the first blossom of this plant that I could inspect, I had imagined that it belonged to the same class with the *Durio*, because the filaments appeared to be distributed in five sets; but in all that I have since examined, they are perfectly distinct.

### III. SRINGA'TACA.

Four and One.

*Cal.* Four-cleft, with a long peduncle, above.

*Cor.* Four petals.

*Stam.* Anthers, kidney-shaped.

*Pist.* Germ, roundish; *Style*, long as the filaments; *Stigma*, clubbed.

*Seed:* A Nut with four opposite angles (two of them sharp thorns) formed by the *Calyx*.

*Leaves:* Those which float on the water, are rhomboidal; the two upper sides unequally notched; the two lower, right lines. Their petioles,

petioles, buoyed up by spindle-shaped, spongy substances, not bladders.

*Root*: Knotty, like coral.

*Uses*: The fresh kernel, in sweetness and delicacy, equals that of the filberd. A mucus, secreted by minute glands, covers the wet leaves, which are considered as cooling.

*Note*, It seems to be the floating *Trapa* of LINNÆUS.

#### IV. PUTICARAJA.

Ten and One.

*Cal.* Five-cleft.

*Cor.* Five equal petals.

*Peric.* A thorny legumen; two seeds.

*Leaves*: Oval, pinnated.

*Stem*: Armed.

*Uses*: The seeds are very bitter, and, perhaps, tonick; since one of them bruised and given in two doses, will, as the *Hindus* assert, cure an intermittent fever,

#### V. MADHUCA.

Many, *not* on the Receptacle, and One.

*Cal.* *Perianth* four, or five, leaved.

*Cor.* One-petaled. *Tube* inflated, fleshy.

*Border* nine, or ten, parted.

*Stam.*



*Stam. Anthers* from twelve to twenty-eight, erect, acute, subvillous.

*Pist. Germ.* roundish; *Style*, long, awl-shaped.

*Peric.* A *Drupe*, with two or three *Nuts*.

*Leaves*: Oval, somewhat pointed.

*Uses*: The tubes, oſculent, nutritious; yielding, by diſtillation, an inebriating ſpirit, which, if the ſale of it were duly reſtrained by law, might be applied to good purpoſes. A uſeful oil is expreſſed from the ſeed.

*Note*, It reſembles the *Baffia* of KOENIG.

SUCH would be the method of the work which I recommend; but even the ſpecimen which I exhibit might, in ſkilful hands, have been more accurate. Engravings of the plants may be annexed; but I have more than once experienced, that the beſt anatomical and botanical prints give a very inadequate, and ſometimes a very falſe, notion of the objects which they were intended to repreſent. As we learn a new language, by reading approved compoſitions in it with the aid of a Grammar and Dictionary, ſo we can only ſtudy with effect the natural hiſtory of vegetables by analyſing the plants themſelves with the *Philophia Botanica*, which is the *Grammar*, and the *Genera et Species Plantarum*, which may be conſidered as the *Dictionary*, of that beautiful language,

in which nature would teach us what plants we must avoid as noxious, and what we must cultivate as salutary ; for that the qualities of plants are *in some degree* connected with the *natural orders and classes* of them, a number of instances would abundantly prove.

## DISSERTATION XV.

ON THE

S P I K E N A R D

OF THE

A N C I E N T S.

**I**T is painful to meet perpetually with words that convey no distinct ideas : and a natural desire of avoiding that pain excites us often to make inquiries, the result of which can have no other use than to give us clear conceptions. Ignorance is to the mind what extreme darkness is to the nerves : both cause an uneasy sensation ; and we naturally love knowledge, as we love light, even when we have no design of applying either to a purpose essentially useful. This is intended as an apology for the pains which have been taken to procure a determinate answer to a question of no apparent utility, but which ought to be readily answered in *India*, “ What “ is *Indian Spikenard* ? ” All agree, that it is an odoriferous plant, the best sort of which, according to *PTOLEMY*, grew about *Ranganritica* or *Ranganati*, and on the borders of the

country now called *Butàn* : it is mentioned by *Dioscorides*, whose work I have not in my possession ; but his description of it must be very imperfect, since neither *Linnaeus* nor any of his disciples pretend to class it with certainty, and, in the latest botanical work that we have received from *Europe*, it is marked as *unknown*. I had no doubt, before I was personally acquainted with *Koenig*, that he had ascertained it ; but he assured me, that he knew not what the *Greek* writers meant by the nard of *India* : he had found, indeed ; and described a sixth species of the nardus, which is called *Indian* in the Supplement to *Linnaeus* ; but the *nardus* is a grass, which, though it bear a *Spike*, no man ever supposed to be the *true* Spikenard, which the great Botanical Philosopher himself was inclined to think a species of *Andropogon*, and places, in his *Materia Medica*, but with an expression of doubt, among his polygamous plants. Since the death of *Koenig* I have consulted every botanist and physician with whom I was acquainted, on the subject before us ; but all have confessed without reserve, though not without some regret, that they were ignorant what was meant by the *Indian* Spikenard.

IN order to procure information from the learned natives, it was necessary to know the

name



*name* of the plant in some *Asiatick* language. The very word *nard* occurs in the Song of SOLOMON; but the name and the thing were both *exotick*: the *Hebrew* lexicographers imagine both to be *Indian*; but the word is in truth *Persian*, and occurs in the following distich of an old poet:

A'n chu bikhesh, in chu nardest, an chu shakhest, in chu bâr,  
A'n chu bikhî pâyidarest, in chu nardi pâyidâr.

It is not easy to determine in this couplet, whether *nard* mean the *stem*, or, as ANJU' explains it, the *pitb*; but it is manifestly a part of a vegetable, and neither the *root*, the *fruit*, nor the *branch*, which are all separately named: the *Arabs* have borrowed the word *nard*, but in the sense, as we learn from the *Kâmûs*, of a compound medicinal unguent. Whatever it signified in old *Persian*, the *Arabick* word *jumbul*, which, like *jumbalah*, means an *ear* or *spike*, has long been substituted for it; and there can be no doubt, that by the *jumbul* of *India* the *Muselmans* understand the same plant with the *nard* of PROBLEMY and the *Nardostachys*, or *Spikenard*, of GALEN; who, by the way, was deceived by the dry specimens which he had seen, and mistook them for *roots*.

A SINGULAR description of the *jumbul* by ABU'LFAZE, who frequently mentions it as an

ingredient in *Indian* perfumes, had for some time almost convinced me, that the *true Spikenard* was the *Cétaca*, or *Pandanus* of our botanists : his words are, *Sumbul panj berg dâred, ceb dirâzi ân dab angoshtestû pahndî seb*: or, “The *sumbul* has  
 “ five leaves, ten fingers long, and three  
 “ broad.” Now I well knew, that the minister of ACBAR was not a botanist, and might easily have mistaken a thyrsus for a single flower : I had seen no blossom, or assemblage of blossoms, of such dimensions, except the male *Cétaca* ; and though the *Persian* writer describes the female as a different plant, by the vulgar name *Cyâra*, yet such a mistake might naturally have been expected in such a work : but what most confirmed my opinion, was the exquisite fragrance of the *Cétaca* flower, which to my sense far surpassed the richest perfumes of *Europe* or *Asia*. Scarce a doubt remained, when I met with a description of the *Cétaca* by FORSKÖHL, whose words are so perfectly applicable to the general idea which we are apt to form of *Spikenard*, that I give you a literal translation of them : “The *Pandanus* is an incomparable plant, and cultivated for its odour,  
 “ which it breathes so richly, that one or two  
 “ *Spikes*, in a situation rather humid, would  
 “ be sufficient to diffuse an odoriferous air for  
 “ a long time through a spacious apartment ;  
 “ so

" so that the natives in general are not solicit-  
 " ous about the living plants, but *purchase the*  
 " *Spikes at a great price.*" I learned also, that  
 a fragrant essential oil was extracted from the  
 flowers ; and I procured from *Banâres* a large  
 phial of it, which was adulterated with sandal ;  
 but the very adulteration convinced me, that  
 the genuine essence must be valuable, from the  
 great number of thyrsi that must be required  
 in preparing a small quantity of it. Thus had  
 I nearly persuaded myself, that the true nard  
 was to be found on the banks of the *Ganges*,  
 where the *Hindu* women roll up its flowers in  
 their long black hair after bathing in the holy  
 river ; and I imagined, that the *precious ala-*  
*baster box* mentioned in the Scripture, and the  
*small onyx*, in exchange for which the poet of-  
 fers to entertain his friend with *a cask of old*  
*wine*, contained an essence of the same kind,  
 though differing in its degree of purity, with  
 the nard which I had procured : but an *Arab*  
 of *Mecca*, who saw in my study some flowers of  
 the *Cétaca*, informed me, that the plant was  
 extremely common in *Arabia*, where it was  
 named *Cludbi* ; and several *Mahomedans* of rank  
 and learning have since assured me, that the  
 true name of the *Indian Sumbul* was not *Cétaca*,  
 but *Jatamânsi*. This was important informa-  
 tion ; finding therefore, that the *Pandanus* was



not peculiar to *Hindustán*, and considering that the *Sumbul* of *ABU'LEAZL* differed from it in the precise number of leaves on the thyrsus, in the colour, and in the season of flowering, though the length and breadth corresponded very nearly, I abandoned my first opinion, and began to inquire eagerly for the *Jatámánsi*, which grew, I was told, in the garden of a learned and ingenious friend, and fortunately was then in blossom. A fresh plant was very soon brought to me: it appeared on inspection to be a most elegant *Cyperus* with a polished three-sided culm, an umbella with three or four ensiform leaflets minutely serrated, naked proliferous peduncles, crowded spikes, expanded daggers; and its branchy root had a pungent taste with a faint aromatick odour; but no part of it bore the least resemblance to the drug known in *Europe* by the appellation of *Spikenard*; and a *Muselman* physician from *Dehli* assured me positively, that the plant was not *Jatámánsi*, but *Súd*, as it is named in *Arabick*, which the author of the *Tohfatul Mumenin* particularly distinguishes from the *Indian Sumbul*. He produced on the next day an extract from the Dictionary of Natural History, to which he had referred; and I present you with a translation of all that is material in it.

“ 1. *SUD* has a roundish olive-shaped root;  
 “ externally black, but white internally, and

“ so



“ so fragrant as to have obtained in *Persia* the  
 “ name of *Subterranean Musk* : its leaf has  
 “ some resemblance to that of a leek, but is  
 “ longer and narrower, strong, somewhat  
 “ rough at the edges, and tapering to a point.  
 “ 2. *SUMBUL* means a *spike* or *ear*, and was  
 “ called *nard* by the *Greeks*. There are three  
 “ sorts of *Sumbul* or *Narden* ; but, when the  
 “ word stands alone, it means the *Sumbul* of  
 “ *India*, which is an herb *without flower or*  
 “ *fruit* (he speaks of the drug only), like the  
 “ tail of an ermine, or of a small weasel, but  
 “ not quite so thick, and about the length of a  
 “ finger. It is darkish, inclining to yellow,  
 “ and very fragrant : it is brought from *Hin-*  
 “ *dustán*, and its medicinal virtue lasts three  
 “ years.” It was easy to procure the dry *Jatámánsi*, which corresponded perfectly with the description of the *Sumbul* ; and though a native *Muselmán* afterwards gave me a *Persian* paper, written by himself, in which he represents the *Sumbul* of *India*, the *Sweet Sumbul*, and the *Jatámánsi* as three different plants, yet the authority of the *Tobfatu’l Múmenín* is decisive, that the *sweet Sumbul* is only another denomination of *nard*, and the physician, who produced that authority, brought, as a specimen of *Sumbul*, the very same drug, which my *Pandit*, who is also a physician, brought as a specimen of the  
*Jatámánsi* :

*Jatámánsi*: a *Bráhmén* of eminent learning gave me a parcel of the same sort, and told me that it was used in their sacrifices; that, when fresh, it was exquisitely sweet, and added much to the scent of rich essences, in which it was a principal ingredient; that the merchants brought it from the mountainous country to the north-east of *Bengal*; that it was the entire plant, not a part of it, and received its *Sanscrit* names from its resemblance to *locks of hair*; as it is called *Spikenard*, I suppose, from its resemblance to a *Spike*, when it is dried, and not from the configuration of its flowers, which the *Greeks*, probably, never examined. The *Persian* author describes the whole plant as resembling the tail of an ermine; and the *Jatámánsi*, which is manifestly the *Spikenard* of our druggists, has precisely that form, consisting of withered stalks and ribs of leaves, cohering in a bundle of yellowish brown capillary fibres, and constituting a spike about the size of a small finger. We may on the whole be assured, that the *nardus* of *PTOLEMY*, the *Indian Sumbul* of the *Persians* and *Arabs*, the *Jatámánsi* of the *Hindus*, and the *Spikenard* of our shops, are one and the same plant; but to what class and genus it belongs in the *Linneæan* system, can only be ascertained by an inspection of the fresh blossoms. Dr. PATRICK RUSSEL, who al-

ways

ways communicates with obliging facility his extensive and accurate knowledge, informed me by letter, that “Spikenard is carried over the Desert (from *India* I presume) to *Aleppo*, “where it is used in substance, mixed with “other perfumes, and worn in small bags, or “in the form of essence, and kept in little boxes “or phials, like *Star* of roses.” He is persuaded, and so am I, that the *Indian* nard of the ancients, and that of our shops, is one and the same vegetable.

THOUGH diligent researches have been made at my request on the borders of *Bengal* and *Behâr*, yet the *Jatamânsi* has not been found growing in any part of the *British* territories. Mr. SAUNDERS, who met with it in *Butân*, where, as he was informed, it is very common, and whence it is brought in a dry state to *Rangpûr*, has no hesitation in pronouncing it a species of the *Baccharis*; and since it is not possible that he could mistake the *natural* order and *essential* character of the plant, which he examined, I had no doubt that the *Jatamânsi* was composite and corymbiferous, with stamens connected by the anthers, and with female prolifick florets intermixed with hermaphrodites: the word *Spike* was not used by the ancients with botanical precision, and the *Stachys* itself is verticillated, with only two species out of fifteen, that  
could



could justify its generick appellation. I therefore concluded, that *the true Spikenard* was a *Baccharis*, and that, while the philosopher had been searching for it to no purpose,

---

the dull swain  
Trod on it daily with his clouted shoon;

for the *Baccharis*, it seems, as well as the *Gonyza*, is called by our gardeners, *Ploughman's Spikenard*. I suspected, nevertheless, that the plant which Mr. SAUNDERS described was not *Jataminsi*, because I knew that the people of *Bután* had no such name for it, but distinguished it by very different names in different parts of their hilly country : I knew also, that the *Butias*, who set a greater value on the drug than it seems, as a perfume, to merit, were extremely reserved in giving information concerning it, and might be tempted, by the narrow spirit of monopoly, to mislead an inquirer for the fresh plant. The friendly zeal of Mr. PURLING will probably procure it in a state of vegetation ; for, when he had the kindness, at my desire, to make inquiries for it among the *Bután* merchants, they assured him, that the living plants could not be obtained without an order from their sovereign the *Dévarájdá*, to whom he immediately dispatched a messenger with an earnest request, that eight

or



or ten of the growing plants might be sent to him at *Rangpûr* ; should the *Dévarâjâ* comply with that request, and should the vegetable flourish in the plain of *Bengal*, we shall have ocular proof of its class, order, genus, and species ; and, if it prove the same with the *Jatâmânsî* of *Népâl*, which I now must introduce to your acquaintance, the question, with which I began this essay, will be satisfactorily answered.

HAVING traced the *Indian* Spikenard, by the name of *Jatâmânsî*, to the mountains of *Népâl*, I requested my friend Mr. LAW, who then resided at *Gayâ*, to procure some of the recent plants by the means of the *Népalese* pilgrims ; who being orthodox *Hindus*, and possessing many rare books in the *Sanscrit* language, were more likely than the *Butias* to know the true *Jatâmânsî*, by which name they generally distinguish it : many young plants were accordingly sent to *Gayâ*, with a *Persian* letter specifically naming them, and apparently written by a man of rank and literature ; so that no suspicion of deception or of error can be justly entertained. By a mistake of the gardener, they were all planted at *Gayâ*, where they have blossomed, and at first seemed to flourish : I must, therefore, describe the *Jatâmânsî* from the report of Mr. BURT, who favoured me with a drawing of  
of

of it, and in whose accuracy we may perfectly confide ; but, before I produce the description, I must endeavour to remove a prejudice, in regard to the *natural order* of the spikenard, which they, who are addicted to swear by every word of their master LINNÆUS, will hardly abandon, and which I, who love truth better than him, have abandoned with some reluctance. *Nard* has been generally supposed to be a *grass* ; and the word *stachys* or *spike*, which agrees with the habit of that natural order, gave rise, perhaps, to the supposition. There is a plant in *Java*, which most travellers and some physicians call *spikenard* ; and the Governor of *Chinsura*, who is kindly endeavouring to procure it thence in a state fit for examination, writes me word, that “ a *Dutch* author pronounces it a *grass like the Cypirus*, but insists that what we call the *spike* is the fibrous part above the root, as long as a man’s little finger, of a brownish hue inclining to red or yellow, rather fragrant, and with a pungent, but aromattick, scent.” This is too slovenly a description to have been written by a botanist ; yet I believe the latter part of it to be tolerably correct, and should imagine that the plant was the same with our *Jatimansi*, if it were not commonly asserted, that the *Javan* spikenard was used as a condiment, and if a well-

well-informed man, who had seen it in the island, had not assured me, that it was a sort of *Pimento*, and consequently a species of *Myrtle*, and of the order now called *Hesperian*. The resemblance before mentioned between the *Indian Sumbul* and the *Arabian Sūd*, or *Cypirus*, had led me to suspect, that the true nard was a grass or a reed; and as this country abounds in odoriferous grasses, I began to collect them from all quarters. Colonel KYN obligingly sent me two plants with sweet-smelling roots; and as they were known to the *Pandits*, I soon found their names in a *Sanscrit* dictionary: one of them is called *gandbasat'bi*, and used by the *Hindus* to scent the red powder of *Sapan* or *Bakkam* wood, which they scatter in the festival of the vernal season; the other has many names, and, among them, *nāgaramaṣṭac* and *gōnarda*, the second of which means *rustling in the water*; for all the *Pandits* insist, that *nard* is never used as a noun in *Sanscrit*, and signifies, as the root of a verb, *to sound* or *to rustle*. Soon after, Mr. BURROW brought me, from the banks of the *Ganges* near *Heridwār*, a very fragrant grass, which in some places covers whole acres, and diffuses, when crushed, so strong an odour, that a person, he says, might easily have smelt it, as ALEXANDER is reported to have smelt the nard of *Gedrosia*, from the back of an elephant: its blossoms were



were not preserved, and it cannot, therefore, be described. From Mr. BLANE of *Lucnow* I received a fresh plant, which has not flowered at *Calcutta*; but I rely implicitly on his authority, and have no doubt that it is a species of *Andropogon*: it has rather a rank aromack odour, and, from the virtue ascribed to it of curing intermittent fevers, is known by the *Sanscrit* name of *jwarāncusa*, which literally means a *fever-book*, and alludes to the *iron-book* with which elephants are managed. Lastly, Dr. ANDERSON of *Madras*, who delights in useful pursuits and in assisting the pursuits of others, favoured me with a complete specimen of the *Andropogon Nardus*, one of the most common grasses on the Coast, and flourishing most luxuriantly on the mountains, never eaten by cattle, but extremely grateful to bees, and containing an essential oil, which, he understands, is extracted from it in many parts of *Hindustān*, and used as an *atar* or *perfume*. He adds a very curious philological remark, that, in the *Tamul* dictionary, most words beginning with *nār* have some relation to *fragrance*; as *nāruckeradu* to yield an odour, *nārtum pillu*, lemon-grass, *nārtei*, citron, *nārta manum*, the wild orange-tree, *nārum panei*, the *Indian Jasmine*, *nārum alleri*, a strong smelling flower, and *nārtu*, which is put for *nard* in the *Tamul* version.



version of our Scriptures : so that not only the *nard* of the *Hebrews* and *Greeks*, but even the *copia narium* of *HORACE*, may be derived from an *Indian* root : to this I can only say, that I have not met with any such root in *Sanscrit*, the oldest polished language of *India*, and that in *Persian*, which has a manifest affinity with it, *nâr* means a *pomegranate*, and *nârgil* (a word originally *Sanscrit*) a *cocoa-nut*, neither of which has any remarkable fragrance.

SUCH is the evidence in support of the opinion, given by the great *Swedish* naturalist, that the true *nard* was a gramineous plant and a species of *Andropogon* ; but since no grass, that I have yet seen, bears any resemblance to the *Yatamânsi*, which I conceive to be the *nardus* of the ancients, I beg leave to express my dissent, with some confidence as a philologer, though with humble diffidence as a student in botany. I am not, indeed, of opinion, that the *nardum* of the *Romans* was merely the essential oil of the plant, from which it was denominated, but am strongly inclined to believe, that it was a generick word, meaning what we now call *âtar*, and either the *âtar* of roses from *Cashmir* and *Persia*, that of *Cétaca*, or *Pandanus*, from the western coast of *India*, or that of *Aguru*, or aloe-wood, from *Asam* or *Cochinchina*, the process of obtaining which is described by *ABU'LEAZL*, or the mixed perfume called *âhir*, of which the principal ingredients

were yellow sandal, violets, orange-flowers, wood of aloes, rose-water, musk, and true spikenard : all those essences and compositions were costly ; and most of them being sold by the *Indians* to the *Persians* and *Arabs*, from whom, in the times of OCTAVIUS, they were received by the *Syrians* and *Romans*, they must have been extremely dear at *Jerusalem* and at *Rome*. There might also have been a pure *nardine oil*, as ATHENÆUS calls it ; but *nardum* probably meant (and KOENIG was of the same opinion) an *Indian* essence in general, taking its name from that ingredient which had, or was commonly thought to have, the most exquisite scent. But I have been drawn by a pleasing subject to a greater length than I expected, and proceed to the promised description of the *true nard*, or *Jatámánsi*, which, by the way, has other names in the *Amarehsb*, the smoothest of which are *jatílá* and *lémasá*, both derived from words meaning *hair*. Mr. BURT, after a modest apology for his imperfect acquaintance with the language of botanists, has favoured me with an account of the plant, on the correctness of which I have a perfect reliance, and from which I collect the following *natural characters* :

#### AGGREGATE.

*Cal.* Scarce any. *Margin*, hardly discernible.

*Cor.*

*Cor.* One petal. *Tube* somewhat gibbous.  
*Border* five cleft.

*Stam.* Three *Anthems*.

*Pist.* Germ beneath. One *Style* erect.

*Seed* Solitary, crowned with a pappus.

*Root* Fibrous.

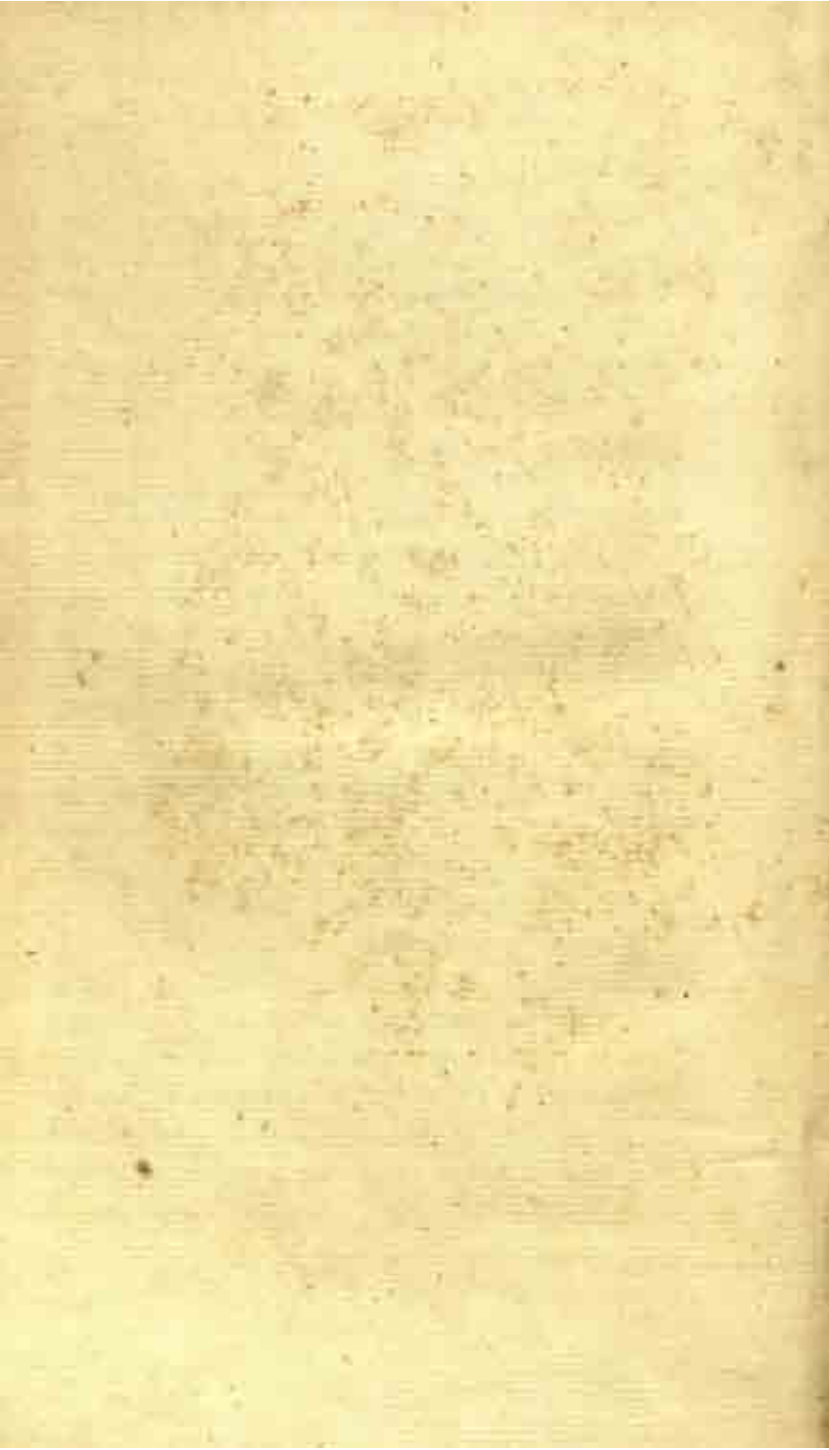
*Leaves* Hearted, fourfold; *radical* leaves petioled.

It appears, therefore, to be the *Protean* plant VALERIAN, a sister of the Mountain and *Celtick* Nard, and of a species which I should describe in the *Linnean* style, VALE-RIANA JATA'MANSI floribus triandris foliis cordatis quaternis, radicalibus petiolatis. The radical leaves, rising from the ground and en- folding the young stem, are plucked up with a part of the root, and, being dried in the sun, or by an artificial heat, are sold as a drug, which from its appearance has been called *spike-nard*; though, as the *Persian* writer observes, it might be compared more properly to the tail of an ermine: when nothing remains but the dry fibres of the leaves, which retain their original form; they have some resemblance to a lock of hair, from which the *Sanserit* name, it seems, is derived. Two mercantile agents from *Butan* on the part of the *Dévaraja* were examined, at my request, by Mr. HARRINGTON, and informed him, that the drug which the *Bengalese* call *Jatamansi*, “grew erect above  
 “ the

“ the surface of the ground, resembling in  
“ colour an ear of green wheat ; that, when  
“ recent, it had a faint odour, which was  
“ greatly increased by the simple process of  
“ drying it ; that it abounded on the hills, and  
“ even on the plains, of *Butan*, where it was  
“ collected and prepared for medicinal pur-  
“ poses.” What its virtues are, experience  
alone can ascertain ; but, as far as botanical ana-  
logy can justify a conjecture, we may suppose  
them to be antispasmodick ; and in our pro-  
vinces, especially in *Behar*, the plant will prob-  
ably flourish ; so that we may always procure  
it in a state fit for experiment. On the proposed  
enquiry into the virtues of this celebrated plant,  
I must be permitted to say, that although many  
botanists may have wasted their time in enu-  
merating the qualities of vegetables, without  
having ascertained them by repeated and satis-  
factory experiments, and although *mere botany*  
goes no farther than technical arrangement and  
description, yet it seems indubitable, that the  
great end and aim of a botanical philosopher is,  
to discover and prove the several uses of the  
vegetable system, and, while he admits with  
HIPPOCRATES the *fallaciousness of experience*,  
to rely on experiment alone as the basis of his  
knowledge.









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